Minutes of the
Meeting of the Executive Committee
of the World Council of Churches
7 – 12 June, 2017
Ecumenical Institute at Bossey, Switzerland

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1. Prayers

On 7 June, Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit, general secretary of the World Council of Churches (WCC) welcomed everyone to the meeting and to the morning prayers. The prayers were held in the Chapel at the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey. The scripture readings were Psalm 104:24-34, 35b and Acts 2:14-24, 32-33.

On 8 June, the scripture readings were Psalm 15:1-15 and Ephesians 2:11-12 and Rev. Dr Henriette Hutabarat-Lebang (Gereja Toraja) offered a reflection.

On 9 June, the scripture readings were Psalm 104:24-34, 35b and John 20:19-23 and Rev. Dr Andrew Williams (WCC staff worship consultant, Uniting Church of Australia) offered a reflection.

On 10 June, the scripture readings were 3 John 1-15 and John 16:20-33.

On Sunday, 11 June, executive committee members attended different churches in Geneva. Members attended the Russian Orthodox Church, Divine Liturgy at Chambésy Orthodox Centre, Emmanuel Episcopal Church, Holy Trinity Church, Geneva Evangelical Lutheran Church English-speaking congregation, and Church of Scotland.

On 12 June, the scripture readings were Genesis 1:1, 26-2:3 and Matthew 28:16-20. Rev. Dr Sharon Watkins (Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) offered a reflection.

2. Opening Actions

2.1. WELCOME BY MODERATOR

Dr Agnes Abuom (Anglican Church of Kenya), moderator of the WCC central committee, moderated a hearing session.

She reflected: “Keep the movement moving; keep the dignity and integrity of the organization.”

She shared that WCC is both a movement and an institution, and there can be tension between the two components which is natural as long as it is constructive. She highlighted a few events that have impacted her and kept her wondering how we in the WCC and the wider ecumenical movement can enhance our strategic position, strategic mandate of working for the unity of humanity and appropriate our potential of contributing to the common good and future of all humanity.

The WCC work on the Churches’ Commitment to Children is one area with common ground with all religious communities in affirming life and lifting the voices of the vulnerable and voiceless in their search and cry for justice and peace. She reflected that the focus on children provides an entry point for broader, deeper and effective engagement vertically and horizontally with actors on the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace.

Governments and intergovernmental organizations/institutions now recognize, accept and acknowledge, though sometimes reluctantly, the role of religion particularly in contributing to peace and development. While this is a positive development, robust discussion about and further examination of the nature and scope of our relationships and partnerships is needed.

In her work on behalf of the churches she continues to witness the resilience of people whose communities patch up their broken pieces; rebuild relationships and build bridges of connectivity. She shared that amidst the challenges and tribulations, we are challenged to manage transitions in ways that will ensure the ecumenical movement keeps moving in the right direction according to the purposes for which it was founded and of course informed by the contemporary circumstances.

2.2. ROLL CALL

The moderator invited WCC general secretary, Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit to read the roll call.

Dr Tveit also welcomed everyone to the work of the executive committee. The full list of participants is in Appendix I.

Apologies were received from the following members of the committee:

- Rev. Dr Micheline Kamba Kasongo
- Mr Thomas Hyeono Kang
- Ms Martina Viktorie Kopecká
- Most Rev. Dr Chibuzo Raphael Opoko
- Bishop John F. White
- Rev. Robina Winbush

It was noted that Mr Kang had resigned from the executive committee but that no replacement had been named yet.

2.3. SHARING BY MEMBERS AND COMMISSION MODERATORS

Bishop Dr Mary Ann Swenson (United Methodist Church), vice-moderator of the WCC central committee, shared that she and Dr Watkins had participated in a Pentecost celebration with Churches United in Christ. It was a national celebration of the member churches' recognition of the ordained ministries of each communion and a celebration of the Eucharist at one common table. Earlier in the spring, she hosted a meeting of the Joint Consultative Group between the WCC and Pentecostals (JCG) at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California, USA. She had also hosted the governing board executive committee of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA (NCCC USA). Their meeting took place from 8-10 May 2017.

Bishop Samuel Robert Azariah (Church of Pakistan) hosted a delegation from the China Christian Council (CCC), visiting the Church of Pakistan. It was a five-member delegation, led by Rev. Baoping Kan (China Christian Council) and was the first time that the Church of Pakistan has participated in a south-to-south church relationship. Both churches were excited about the development of this new relationship.

He said that in Pakistan the churches continue to lament the discriminatory laws in the country. The blasphemy law continues to be used and misused. He requested the WCC assist in bringing this situation to the fore.

Bishop Petra Bosse-Huber (Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland) shared that in Germany, the churches are busy this year because of the celebration of the 500 years since the Reformation. She noted that this has been great pleasure and joy for them. The Kirchentag took place in Berlin and Wittenberg in Germany from 24-28 May 2017. She expressed gratefulness that so many young people were there. They had a

summer school and a youth camp. She concluded by sharing that it was an honour that the Ecumenical Patriarchate visited them during the celebrations.

H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Nifon of Targoviste (Romanian Orthodox Church) shared that in Romania there is a huge coalition to defend the traditional family. In the Romanian constitution, marriage is defined as the free union between two spouses, without gender specific language. There is now a strong movement to change the article in the constitution to define marriage as between a man and a woman. Very soon a national referendum will take place. He added that this kind of movement is also happening in Poland and Hungary. Sometimes the churches that are ecumenical are accused of not supporting the traditional family. He asked that the members pray for the churches and people in Romania in this regard.

Rev. Dr Hyun Ju Bae (Presbyterian Church of Korea) shared that she had participated in the WCC gender advisory group meeting in conjunction with the CWME in Atlanta, GA, USA in January. This allowed the two groups to have a joint session to discuss how to implement the recommendations made by the gender advisory group as the CWME works towards their Conference on World Mission and Evangelism in 2018. She was impressed by the members of the preparatory committee for their willingness to engage and particularly appreciated the leadership of the CWME moderator, Metropolitan Dr Mor Geevarghese Coorilos.

She also reported that during the time between the previous meeting and this meeting, there was a non-violent people's revolution which played a crucial role in the impeachment of the previous president and the election of a new president. The current president, Moon Jae-in, previously worked as a human rights lawyer in Busan; he is Catholic, and has membership with the National Council of Churches in Korea (NCCK) and the YMCA in Korea. She is glad he is connected with the ecumenical movement.

Dr Bae shared that in the previous week an ecumenical delegation came to Korea and met with this president. Among others, the general secretary and the WCC president for Asia, Dr Chang participated in the visit which was covered in the newspapers in Korea. She appreciated the visibility of the WCC in Korean society and the work of the WCC to bring about peace in the Korean peninsula and in Southeast Asia.

Ms Teny Pirri-Simonian (Armenian Apostolic Church (Holy See of Cilicia)) shared that she was happy to be participating as H.E. Archbishop Dr Nareg Alemezian could not be present. She transmitted the greetings of His Holiness Aram I and reflected that it had been 102 years since the Armenian genocide. One of the places which welcomed the refugees, Aleppo in Syria is now completely destroyed and its people are dispersed. His Holiness Aram I is discussing with people what to do if there is peace and how to rebuild the city. She stated that a new process beginning in the church to reflect on Armenian identity 102 years after the genocide for those in Turkey given the processes of islamization there.

Ms Pirri-Simonian raised a concern about the membership of the WCC's gender advisory group noting that the group has no representation from the Oriental Orthodox family.

Dr Quawas shared that tension is still growing about peace process related to the two-state solution in Israel and Palestine. There is no way to implement the international decisions that were taken by the United Nations (UN).

He also reported that consensus had been reached to renovate the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. The churches involved in the renovation were the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, Armenian Orthodox Patriarchate, and Roman Catholic Church (Franciscans). Donations for the renovations came from different countries, but also from individuals, and he offered thanks to them. Some donations came

from individual Muslims, such as King Abdullah of Jordan. This was therefore an excellent opportunity to prove that Christians and Muslims can live together in the most holy place.

Bishop Simo Peura (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland) also shared about celebrating the 500 years of Reformation in Finland. In addition, this year marks 100 years of independence for Finland and it was not always easy to combine the celebration of the Reformation and the celebration of independence together. In addition, the church recently had Roman Catholic and Lutheran dialogues on ministry, Eucharist and ecclesiology. A report of the Finnish Lutheran-Catholic dialogue will be published in October 2017. He hopes that this report will have wider use for Lutheran-Catholic dialogue in the international community.

He also noted that a difficult dialogue is taking place related to the issue of the state policy. In some cases, people have come to Finland and converted from Islam to Christianity, and then are sent back. Their lives are in danger because of this. Because of this some stay in Finland illegally. He concluded that there is a big challenge in Europe about how to deal with this issue.

Archpriest Mikhail Goundiaev (Russian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate)) shared that in his country they are marking the 100-year anniversary of the Russia Revolution which resulted in a terrible persecution of the Russian Orthodox Church. However 1917 was also the year the local Council of Churches in the Russian Orthodox Church began their work and restored the institution of patriarchy; it was very important in the time of history. He shared that there will be some celebrations connected to this council and to the restoration of the patriarchy.

He shared concerns for the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. In May, two laws were being put to vote in the Ukrainian Supreme Rada. These laws would legalize a discriminatory legal practice unheard of in today's Europe with regard to the majority of the Orthodox population in Ukraine, and which furthers the growth of instability in the Ukrainian society and the growing of the conflict into a religious confrontation.

He noted that one of these bills introduces a vague notion of 'a person's belonging to a religious community' on the basis of some 'self-identification'. Those who 'belong to a religious community', whoever may claim this title, are to be granted a right to change the statute of a community and to move to a different religious organization by simple majority vote. Another bill proposes to impose on all the communities whose centres of canonical subordination are located in Russia (that is, primarily the communities of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church) a certain 'special status' involving the essential deprivation of rights. The bill gives the government of a secular state the greatest possible powers for controlling the internal life of religious communities, such as approving the appointment of leaders of communities, allowing or disallowing visits by religious leaders from other countries as well as forcibly liquidating religious communities on a wide range of grounds.

The Ukrainian Orthodox Church is the largest confession in Ukraine, present in all the regions of the country and possessing of a colossal peace-making potential. The parliamentary adoption of the above-mentioned bills will threaten the constitutional rights of millions of Ukrainian believers, generate a wave of violence and new capture of churches and aggravate the civic conflict in Ukraine by moving it to the religious domain.

The WCC has underscored that it was a real intrusion of the state into religious affairs and has had influence in postponing this legislation. He shared that they still have people from both sides of the conflict "in our church and who are members of our church."

He concluded by noting that the Russian Orthodox Church has made some effort to relieve the suffering of Christians in Syria. May 24 is usually the day when people give flowers for the name day of Patriarch

Kirill of Moscow and All Russia. This year, Patriarch Kirill asked people not to buy presents of flowers, but instead to collect that money saved by not buying flowers, be sent to Syria to help alleviate their suffering.

Rev. Baoping Kan shared that after the executive committee meeting in China in November 2016, there was a large report about the meeting on the website and in the China Christian Council (CCC) magazine. Many Chinese Christians were encouraged by the meeting and see that the church is supported by ecumenical churches.

He agreed that the CCC visit to Pakistan had been very informative and meaningful.

On 25 October, the church in China will celebrate 500 years of reformation. They will have a consultation to reflect on how the church will be inspired by the good reformation, and how the church in China became Chinese.

Rev. Dr Paul Gardner (Moravian Church in Jamaica) shared that over the past few years, the churches in the region have been trying to find ways of means to put new life into the Caribbean Council of Churches. There are some serious challenges with respect to the role and place of the Caribbean Council of Churches; it is for the most part not functioning. There was a consultation held in Trinidad earlier this year about the United Nations goals on HIV/AIDS and he had been asked to coordinate this consultation, getting other people from the civil society involved. He shared that all of these are happening because the lack of the vibrant role of the Caribbean Council of Churches. They continue to see if they can find new ways of working together as the church in the Caribbean.

He shared that the Worldwide Moravian Church meets every seven years, and in August 2016, they met in Montego Bay, Jamaica. This year, the Moravian Church in Jamaica will have its Synod in July. He shared that he has been the President of the Moravian Church in Jamaica and Cayman Islands since 2005. When the Synod meets in July, his term as President will come to an end and new leadership will be elected.

Dr Watkins reflected that right now in the USA, everything happens against the backdrop of the person who is now in the White House. Despite the recent declaration about the new American attitude with respect to the Paris Accord climate change agreement, she sees around the country a resilience and articulation that no matter what may come from the White House, the American people have come to a point in realizing that they have a leadership role to play in protecting the planet.

She had participated in a meeting in Norfolk, Virginia which is a coastal city. There, annual flooding occurs because of the rising sea levels and local churches have to check flood levels every week to see if they can come to church. Rising sea levels and the increasing violence of storms is a reality and the local churches must continue to do what they must do to be part of the world community to be part of protecting our shared homes. They will continue to find ways to resist; this is only beginning.

She appreciated the WCC leadership in its visit to the USA in solidarity on issues of race. Racism is a reality, and the NCCC USA has organized a task force on this. Their governing board voted their full commitment to a process, and are currently calling it a truth and reconciliation process. They know that the truth-telling part is the first part, and this is what they can define. They are not sure how soon they can get to reconciliation, or if reparations or reconciliation comes next. There will be a major launch in April 2018, which will be 50 years since the assassination of civil rights leader Rev. Dr Martin Luther King, Jr. She concluded by sharing that she continues to be grateful to the WCC for the solidarity, for coming to the USA, and saying how they can share the solidarity of the brothers and sisters in the ecumenical fellowship.

Rev. Dr Hutabarat-Lebang shared that until last year, many countries came to Indonesia to have inter-religious dialogue and to see about how we can live together with people of different faiths. There is now growing religious intolerance, the politicization of religion, and the implementation of a blasphemy law. The Council of Churches is bringing these concerns to the attention of the government and the government responded seriously on the issue of rising radicalism.

She said how grateful she is for the responses of the churches. What they need at this moment is solidarity with all the people in Indonesia who care about the goodness of people and of the nation, and to not let the country be destroyed by militant groups. Hate speech can be easily distributed by social media and can influence the election of the government. Collaboration can be seen between people of different faiths for fighting against so-called extremism. Plans for the churches, including the Roman Catholic Church, to come together are being made to see what kind of renewal and reformation they need in Indonesia with regards to the changing situation in Indonesia at this time.

H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima (Ecumenical Patriarchate), vice-moderator of the WCC central committee, said that in April there was a referendum held to increase the powers of the Turkish president. The referendum was approved in a limited way, 51%, which means the country is divided. The country is also facing real persecution in all levels. He noted that they are persecuting people who are following an Imam who is behind the coup of last July. Turkey also faces the situation of Middle East refugees, particularly Syrians, who currently constitute 3 million in the whole country.

Ms Sarah Kambarami (ACT Alliance) brought greetings from their outgoing general secretary Dr John Nduna, as well as from their new general secretary, Mr Rudelmar Bueno de Faria. On their behalf she conveyed the strong commitment of ACT Alliance to engagement with and support for the ecumenical family. She reported that along with the leadership transition ACT is working on revising its strategic plan and preparing for the ACT Alliance general assembly in October 2018.

Mr Jim Winkler, general secretary and president, National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA (NCCC USA), shared that in addition to the efforts of the organization to resist the president's recent decision to withdraw from the Paris Accord, they also want to stop his proposed travel ban. The proposed travel ban is going to the Supreme Court for a decision and Mr Winkler asked for prayers that this court will uphold the same decision of the lower courts. He shared that the NCCC USA is at the forefront of the resistance to the administration's proposed budget cuts that will affect the poor and needy.

The NCCC USA will be holding their Christian Unity Gathering in November 2018 in the Washington DC area, and it will focus on resistance and resilience.

The executive committee held a moment of silence, then Metropolitan Dr Mor Geevarghese Coorilos (moderator, Commission on World Mission & Evangelism) offered a short prayer for all that had been shared.

2.4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Dr Abuom asked if there were comments, questions, or changes that needed to be made to the agenda. No changes were suggested.

The agenda was approved by consensus.

2.5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Dr Abuom asked if there were corrections and comments to be made to the minutes.

Dr Quawas offered a word of thanks that the minutes arrived on time, and that they were very comprehensive. He is thankful for work of the minute-taker, Ms Adele Halliday, and for the WCC administrative staff who finalized the minutes both in print and online. Appreciation was expressed.

The minutes were approved by consensus.

2.6. APPROVAL OF SUB-COMMITTEES (MEMBERSHIP)

Dr Abuom asked for the approval of the sub-committee membership.

It was agreed that H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Nifon of Targoviste would moderate the public issues sub-committee.

The membership of the sub-committees was approved by consensus. A full list of sub-committee membership is in Appendix II.

2.7. CONSENSUS REFRESHER

Dr Abuom shared that the executive committee is already very familiar with consensus procedures and has good knowledge of the consensus process. As a result, for this meeting, the leadership did not think that it would be necessary to have a consensus refresher as we have done in past meetings.

This was agreed by consensus.

3. Report of the General Secretary

3.1. GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

Dr Abuom moderated a hearing session and invited the general secretary to present his report. He introduced his report by saying that it would include less discussion about what he was actually doing, and more discussion about the theme of unity.

The full text of his report follows.

1. Introduction

We are living in a time when the purpose and the objectives of the World Council of Churches are of the highest relevance. The many expressions of polarization, greater gaps between rich and poor, extremism and violence, worries about the future of the planet Earth and withdrawal of accountability for our common home and future create a constant challenge to we stand for, what we can do, and what our values and vision are. This comes to the surface in the efforts to pursue a Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace. There are so many contexts, so many people who long and struggle for more justice, for reconciliation and peace that can bring new light and new hope into their lives. Concluding this report in Jerusalem at Pentecost, invited by HB Patriarch Theophilus III, after celebrating at the empty tomb at the Holy

Sepulchre, praying for the Holy Spirit to come again and again to bring unity and just peace, I think I could see even more clearly the basis and calling we have as a fellowship of churches.

The WCC has been involved in this longing and these struggles, through prayers and hard work, for almost 70 years. At April 24 this year HAH Bartholomew I, the Ecumenical Patriarch, visited the Ecumenical Centre and reminded us in his public speech of the legacy pursued by his predecessors since 1920: the call for a council of churches to work for the visible unity of the church. He showed the clear connection between the quest for unity of the church and the initiatives to serve the unity in the one world crated by God, to care for peace, justice and the environment. In these last months I have been representing the legacy of the WCC together with many of you and with our colleagues in places where we are called to be together on a Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace in our world. This belongs to the identity of the church. Already in Uppsala in 1968, the WCC said that "catholicity is the opposite of all kinds of egoism and particularism" ("The Holy Spirit and the Catholicity of the Church," N. Goodall, ed., *The Uppsala 68 Report*, Geneva, WCC, 13).

Therefore, based on the historical realities in which we live, I believe that there is a need for a new "search for unity." In my report to the executive committee this time, I will discuss how the WCC contributes through many dimensions of our work to the *unity* of the church, and how the unity we are able to express contributes to the unity of humankind. (I will in this report not give an extensive account of visits and meetings, nor the highlights of the programme work, as this is already reported through our website, in the attached overview of visits and meetings, and through other reports to the executive committee.)

2. Our call to unity yesterday and today

We are approaching the 70th anniversary of the WCC, and we shall discuss our plans for this important dimension to what we do in 2018. Through the entire history of the WCC, there has been a commitment to work for both the unity of the church and the common service and witness for justice and peace in the world. Even long before the WCC was established, pioneers of the ecumenical movement established the "World Alliance for Promoting International Friendship through the Churches." We have also had different challenges in combining the two dimensions of the WCC's purpose and identity. We can learn a lot from different attempts to bring these two dimensions of our calling together. In our mid-term evaluation and reflection on our strategic objectives I think we will see that a lot of these concerns and objectives (to combine the two objectives) are still operative in our organization and our fellowship. Most important now is that we develop our theological reflection and our plans so that we make this an even stronger combination.

With regard to our call to unity, I see the picture of a landscape that can be interpreted at least in two different ways. There is, from one perspective, a critical moment in the ecumenical movement as there are polarizing factors and anti-ecumenical dynamics in many of our churches and beyond. There is a struggle about the "soul of Christianity": Shall we be protective or even exclusive as an alternative to searching to embrace the diversity given by God, pursuing ecumenical openness and common initiatives? Another dominating perspective is that there is a stronger momentum for moving together, as pilgrims working and praying together for the values of justice and peace as signs of the kingdom of God present among us. This is not an alternative between being open to the gospel or the tradition of the church, but rather how we understand the gospel as the basis and corrective to how we interpret and live in our respective traditions today. There is willingness in the WCC constituencies and beyond, in the Roman Catholic Church, in the World Evangelical Alliance, among Pentecostal churches and others, to seek a united witness and a common service, to unite our agendas and resources for those who need our joint attention and support the most.

Dear sisters and brothers, this is the landscape that we are moving in together, also as we start moving towards the 11th assembly of the World Council of Churches, in 2021. How are we expressing our response to the call to unity in many different ways in our time, and particularly in ways that the next generations will see as their way – a way of dignity, joy, creativity, openness, humility, courage, and hope?

"God unites, the enemy divides." This was the title of one of the speeches (of the bishop of Oslo, Eivind Berggrav) at the first assembly of the WCC in Amsterdam, August 1948. The speech described how the work for unity belongs to the characteristics of God. The dividing powers of the two world wars were again visible in new divides and an iron curtain. We should not focus on who are our enemies, I think, but we should pay attention to the forces that make people enemies to one another. We have to analyze how the polarizing and dividing powers that lead to conflict and war today are working against the will of God in this world.

In a Faith and Order study on the unity of the church and the unity of humankind" (Faith and Order, "Unity of the Church – Unity of Mankind (1973)", in G. Gassmann (ed.) *Documentary History of Faith and Order 1963-1993*. Geneva, WCC, 137-143), one of the clear conclusions was that the unity of the church is a sign and foretaste of the unity of humankind. In another of the significant joint studies between more departments in the WCC in the 1990s, focusing on the connections between unity, justice and peace, the concept of "costly unity" was developed ("Costly Unity", in T.F. Best and W. Granberg-Michaelson (eds), *Costly Unity*, Geneva, WCC, 1993, 83-104). The call to unity is the basis for all that we do, and we have to remind ourselves again and again what that calling implies in terms of commitment to really overcome our historical division, and to work for a unity that represents both justice and peace. This is not an exercise at the surface of the matters, it goes deep into our lives and priorities. It has a price; it is costly—if we are serious.

This was a very tough lesson to be learned in the Programme to Combat Racism. The struggle against racism became also a battle within and between the churches. The racial division of human beings created in the image of God, divided also in the church. This is a reality of exclusion and division that is not over, and we have to be aware of how it plays out also today. Not only in the matter of race, but also in issues of gender, sexual orientation, et cetera, we have to be aware of how these are complicated issues to deal with. As the WCC we have been addressing racism again in different ways. We have established a reference group on Human Sexuality that provides a space for the challenging conversation about how the churches deal with the many issues related to human sexuality, and how they also affect the quest for unity.

In the unity statement from the 10th assembly in Busan we concluded that the unity of the church and the unity of humankind are interconnected.

"The unity of the Church, the unity of the human community and the unity of the whole creation are interconnected. Christ who makes us one calls us to live in justice and peace and impels us to work together for justice and peace in God's world. The plan of God made known to us in Christ is, in the fullness of time, to gather up all things in Christ, "things in heaven and things on earth (Ephesians 1:9-10)." ("God's Gift and Call to Unity – And our Commitment," Unity Statement adopted by the WCC 10th Assembly on 8 November 2013).

One of the conflicts in our world relates in a special way to both our search for unity as reconciliation and just peace, as well as our theological reflection on unity in faith and in solidarity with one another as churches. These days we remember the war in June 1967 that has led to 50 years of occupation of the land of the Palestinians. We have as the WCC been constantly working for justice and peace in Israel and Palestine. As was noted already in 1948, "…the churches are in duty bound to pray and work for an order

in Palestine as just as may be in the midst of our human disorder" (W. A. Visser 't Hooft (ed.), *The First Assembly of the World Council of Churches*. London, SCM Press, 1949, 163). We continue to do so with different initiatives, and we will continue also in this meeting to discuss how we shall do this work together. There is no way to defend this occupation, which has developed more and more into colonization of an area outside the internationally recognized borders of Israel. To let this occupation continue like this, shows a fundamental lack of understanding of what it means to be the neighbour to others, a lack of will to understand what it means to be in the shoes of the occupied, and a lack of courage to take the consequences of this as a serious moral problem by those who accept the situation.

What is at stake is our commitment to basic values that can come from a deeper understanding of God's call to unity for humankind; a call to unity in diversity but in just peace, not only within and for one group, one people, or one religion, but for all. We have to continue to work and pray that faith in one God will bring another type of relations of justice and peace, one day. This day should come soon, before it is too late.

I have tried to raise this theme - how God is calling us to unity as church and as humanity - in several other contexts in the last several months, as well. In a visit to Harare, organized by the Zimbabwe Council of Churches almost 20 years after the 8th assembly, I was asked to preach at an ecumenical prayer service in the cathedral. I will always remember from that service the diverse and united expressions of the joy of being together in song, prayer and dance, particularly through the women's choirs from different churches. The unity we seek is a unity in joy and celebration, where all can participate, not only something we make statements about or have as a theme for our discussions.

We have to take it into our minds, into our hearts, into our hands: we are called to be one, so that the world may believe that Jesus Christ is sent from the One God. We are called to give witness to this revelation of the love of God in this world, so that the world may believe in God's future. So that the world may have hope. We must search for unity in faith, hope and love. In my sermon in Harare I reflected on how the call to seek what is "above", as we read in Col 3:1ff, is to seek all the attitudes and characteristics of Christ that work for unity. This is what corresponds to the will of God in creation and in salvation, to unite everything in Christ. We are created to be one, we are saved through Christ to be one. This is the deeper meaning of the efforts of our ecumenical organizations and instruments.

The significance of renewing the role of the council of churches in Zimbabwe is an urgent task in a nation deeply divided and with severe problems related to governance and the economy of the country. The conversations with church leaders and with the political leaders showed the need for the churches to contribute to unity, through their own expressions of unity based on justice and peace.

Another perspective of the theological dimension to our quest for unity is expressed in the famous reflections of St Paul in 1 Cor: 12-14 on the unity of the body of Christ. The connection between the ecumenical challenge and problem and the ecumenical response and solution is described as "the better way" of love. The ecumenical endeavours cannot be successful without a deep understanding of what it means to live together in the body of Christ, in the love of Christ. This gives us a dimension to fellowship and unity that might appear as obvious, but from experience we also know that this is the key to all efforts to overcome divisions and conflicts. As there is a need to clarify the dividing questions in the church, whether they are theological or practical, there is no way to separate the dialogue of truth and the dialogue of love. They are in all our efforts interrelated. This approach to unity is of course one of the corner stones also in the connection between the efforts for unity of the church and unity of the world. It has to be seen as an expression of the love of God, which is given to us in Christ, to be shared in our fellowship of the church, and in our efforts to unite the broken world.

In the significant move toward more visible unity expressed in the joint commemoration of 500 years of Reformation, as they are pursued for example in Lund last year and in a joint prayer of confession and reconciliation in Hildesheim, Germany, in March (where I was invited to give greetings on behalf of the WCC), there have been clear connections between the dialogue of truth and the dialogue of love. The way "from conflict to communion" has been described and pursued, even if there are significant unsolved issues between Lutheran churches (and other churches of the Reformation) and the Roman Catholic Church. The Reformation anniversary has offered new opportunities to emphasize what the churches have in common and what has been wrong on both sides.

The expressions of communion are particularly defined through the commitments to common service and witness, as pilgrims seeking the way forward together and not remaining where we are, waiting for everything and all to be settled, but moving and praying that God will lead us to more unity as we move forward. This was the tone in the commemoration events in Lund, and I have heard this language in other contexts as well. Here the emphasis has been on God's grace as the basis for all unity in the church, and the expectation that God will lead the churches into more unity.

Another context where the question of unity has raised new theological reflections on what our faith in God, in one God, means, is in the efforts to address interfaith initiatives for peace, coexistence and unity. One of these significant events in the last months was the international peace conference in Cairo in April – following a round of dialogue between Al Azhar, the Muslim Council of Elders, and the WCC. The Ecumenical Patriarch, HAH Bartholomew, the GS of the NCCCUSA, Mr Jim Winkler, and other church leaders participated in this significant event as well. In my statement at the opening of the conference (which ended by the well-known speeches by HH Pope Francis and the Grand Imam, Sheikh Al Tayeb), I raised the question of how overcoming violence and terror is a matter of taking the faith in One God seriously. This has to do with the impact of the faith in God as the creator of all and therefore the protector and loving God to every human being. We are accountable to one another as to how we prevent violence, but this cannot be separated from our accountability to God. We are called to be the guardian of the sister and the brother, as they are created by God. Furthermore, precisely because of the faith in One God, the creator of all that lives, we cannot use this faith as an excuse for exclusion from the fellowship of humanity. The state must express this belonging together in offering shared citizenship, where all have the same rights and duties in relations to one another. Different faiths, different formulations of faith, cannot be a reason for exclusion in the human fellowship. If exclusion becomes a matter of violence, even in the name of God, it becomes a blasphemy against the One God, creator of all. We continue our reflections on how to overcome the tragic and dangerous connections between religion and violence, and we should be ready to claim even stronger the rights to be protected from violence as we speak for our Christian sisters and brothers.

Since we were in China together, experiencing how the church in China and the Christians there have experienced new times of fellowship and being connected to the global church after years of isolation, we have been addressing many issues together that move us forward. We are moving in the broken, polarized world, but also into a deeper commitment to work for the unity for which we are created, and the unity for which we are saved through the crucifixion and the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. We also see how religion, and also our Christian faith, can be used by the mightiest powers in this world to create injustice, racism, discrimination, and lack of commitment to unity in justice and peace for all. But while leaders of countries will have the interest of their nation as their first priority, it is also clear that many see that the interest of the nation also extends to peace between nations, and caring for the world. We should firmly proclaim that the interest of a group or a nation in the longer perspective is what also serves the whole of humanity. Particularly clearly we see this when we monitor the follow-up of the Paris agreement to end global warming beyond the 2-degrees objective.

The call to unity is not obsolete, it is more urgent than ever. The call to unity for a common and shared witness to Christ is a key dimension of being the one church of Jesus Christ. The challenges we face in the ecumenical movement and in the WCC to express this unity fully, should not lead us to ignore the call to be one, but to more efforts and more perspectives to what it means to be one.

3. The WCC and the focus on visible unity today in our many programmes and initiatives

"The primary purpose of the fellowship of churches in the World Council of Churches is to call one another to visible unity in one faith and in one Eucharistic fellowship, expressed in worship and common life in Christ, through witness and service to the world, and to advance towards that unity in order that the world may believe" (Constitution and Rules of the World Council of Churches, as amended by the 10th assembly of the WCC in Busan, Republic of Korea, 2013).

We are in a very interesting phase at the moment as the WCC Commission on Faith and Order is receiving responses to the first comprehensive Faith and Order document on ecclesiology. This is the most comprehensive and significant common theological reflection we have had on our understanding of the church in the WCC. This is not only about the theme of "unity," but we know that differences in ecclesiology (the theological understanding of the basis, the mission and the order of the church) are significant for how much we can or cannot express our visible unity of the church. The Commission on Faith and Order is meeting next week in South Africa to work together on this process of reception, and we really look forward to the further outcome of this process.

When the central committee decided on the theme of the 10th assembly, we had several proposals and at the end we were discussing whether the theme should include the word "unity" in addition to what we apparently agreed upon: God of life, lead us to justice and peace. After listening to the debate for a while, I recognized that the word "unity" was dividing more than it was uniting. On the other hand, I understood that the CC wanted a theme and a focus that could unite us as churches and not divide us. Paradoxically, we got a consensus because we refrained from using the terminology of unity. However, I remember the support I could sense in the audience when I suggested that exactly the prayer, the openness to seek together for justice and peace is a genuine expression of our search for unity. In the statement of unity from Busan we read "The unity of the church and the unity of humankind are interconnected."

I could hear a reluctance to talk about the unity of the church, the visible unity of the church in the faith, in the sacraments and in the ordained ministry. Some disappointments and experiences of churches going in different directions in some important questions for the faith and life of the churches, in spite of significant results of multilateral and bilateral dialogues, e.g., as they are formulated in the Faith and Order papers.

We accept that the "status quo" in the WCC is that we do not demand consensus in all questions, and that we accept that we do not have the significant level of shared faith and order to express our unity in Christ fully and visibly. We also have to accept that there are more issues coming forward that create challenges for the unity in the churches and among us. Still, there is a wide and amazing acceptance of the WCC as a platform, an ecumenical space, where we do respect one another as churches and work toward more openness, accountability and love expressed in our common Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace. The fact that we work with consensus procedures has led to another acceptance also of the differences between us as something we can tolerate in this level of fellowship.

The just and inclusive community of women and men, adults and children, people of different identities and mixed identities must be addressed as a genuine issue of the unity we are calling for and called to pursue in our midst. This is indeed an expression of the connection between the unity of the church and the unity of humankind. We are reminded: "A true community of women and men is God's gift and promise for humanity, which is created 'in God's image' – male and female (Gen 1:27); and the church,

as prophetic sign of that which God desires for women and men, is called to embody that community in its own life."

As we continue this pilgrimage together towards 2018, 20 years after the commemoration of the end of the ecumenical Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women (1988-1998), we celebrate the gift of our unity against gender-based violence through the Thursdays in Black campaign. Although this intergenerational campaign has become a significant symbolic action against rape and violence, we need to develop it further so that we have more concrete follow-up in building proper attitudes and in advocacy work in the international and national arenas. An example is the WCC's Just Community of Women and Men's strategy to strengthen this advocacy tool with the annual gender advocacy training using the international mechanisms, including the Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). It is crucial that the gender advocacy training equip our member churches to prophetically hold their states accountable to the UN women's human rights mechanism they have ratified.

On the issue of adults and children, there are two examples of how we can improve our unity through proper communication. The first is the creation of intergenerational safe spaces, a methodology developed by the WCC-EHAIA in order to improve communication among children, young adults and adults. In such spaces they engage in genuine dialogue to solve together causes of HIV. This methodology was developed after the realization that we are not communicating in such a way that helps solve our problems. The same methodology can be applied in other areas of communication across generations to solve problems and find answers together. The second is our work on Churches' Commitments to Children, which has created spaces for dialogue among children, young adults and adults. I encourage churches to use the resources developed for mutual support and to consider implementing the commitments through joint efforts.

In the case of people of different identities and mixed identities, we need a psycho-spiritual framework informed by theological and biblical reflections to solve the current problem of violence against people who are different from us. Churches have a contribution to make in this area based on our profound Christian belief that every human life has dignity and value that have to be protected because we are created in the image of God. Moreover, religion at its very core and nature should be life-giving and promote peace. It cannot be used to justify the violation of any of God's creation without contradicting itself.

The mandate of the WCC defined by the 10th assembly includes a strong commitment to work for the peace and unity in the Korean peninsula. This very special unsolved and unsettled situation, still defined only by an armistice treaty, not a peace treaty, is an increased threat to the people of Korea, the North East Asia region, but also to the peace of the world. This has increased by the escalation of military activity and the building of the capacity to have and use nuclear weapons in North Korea, but also the increased military activity and the enormous American military presence in the peninsula. My deep conviction is that the churches – and civil society – have a huge potential in building trustful relations, opening the doors for cooperation and dialogue, and to advocate for peaceful, diplomatic and political solutions to the escalating conflict. The new president of South Korea affirmed this strongly in the meeting we had with him recently in Seoul. The churches and the ecumenical bodies, NCCK, WCC, and the WCRC, are significant in the history of democratization and peace building in the Korean peninsula, and should pursue their way for justice and peace with the parties, particularly at this new opportunity given with the new democratic beginning in South Korea.

This should be given all the attention and commitment we have, as was also clearly expressed in Busan and in the subsequent process led by the WCC. We should use all our influence as the WCC and as member churches in our respective countries to support political initiatives for political processes that can

lead to reduced tensions, normalization of relations, to a new time of unity in diversity for the people of Korea.

The Global Christian Forum (GCF) has gone through an important evaluation and restructuring in terms of who takes responsibility for the proper continuation of this initiative from the WCC 19 years ago. The GCF has offered an opportunity to interact with other church traditions (particularly Evangelical and Pentecostal churches) that have had other emphases in their quest for unity than the Eucharistic fellowship we are searching for according to the basis of the WCC.

A meeting hosted by the WCC in Bossey recently clarified both the character of the GCF as a platform, a forum, not an organization or a group with the mandate to pursue alternative ecumenism or make statements on behalf of the partners. The four "pillars," the WCC, WEA, PCPCU and WPF, agreed to share the responsibility to facilitate the GCF, on the conditions that it is a consultative body and has no aspirations beyond gathering people to build relations, address issues of common concern and interest, and to stimulate better relations between the partners involved. The effect of the almost 20 years of the GCF has been seen in notably improved and more extensive relations and cooperation between partners that had few or difficult relations before. The need to address our common challenges and our common call to witness and service together, has been strongly affirmed. The WCC has had a significant role from the beginning and continues to have it. We have as the WCC reminded the partners that the opposite of "visible unity" is not "invisible unity" but "visible division".

The meeting also offered good conversations and new ideas were tested. The general secretary of the WEA, Bishop Efraim Tendero, proposed that we establish a joint working group between the WCC and the WEA, addressing common agendas like human rights, religious freedom, climate change, economic justice, peace initiatives, et cetera. I think this could be another very strategic move forward, as we could establish channels for our own initiatives that could go beyond what we have at the moment.

This initiative in establishing the GCF to extend the circle of relations, building a platform that could give some signs of visible unity has had certain challenges, particularly in the understanding of the tasks of this forum, and the limits of those tasks. But there are many reasons to continue this cooperation and to harvest even more fruits from it.

The unity of peoples and nations must in almost every case be developed as a multicultural and multireligious society. This fact creates a lot of challenges that are to be addressed in all parts of the world. The increased migration, at a level higher than ever since WWII, represents enormous challenges but also always new possibilities. The churches' role in giving a value base for how to address migration, and particularly the very high number of refugees, should be one of our assets and contributions to many nations in search for new solutions. The care for the human dignity of everybody, as well as the human rights for refugees and migrants, must be a joint priority for churches around the world. Again, we are challenged in our understanding of the one humanity living in one world created by one God. We should continue our role of defining the dignity and rights of everybody as the basis for our living together, respecting international law and most of all, calling and working for just peace in areas of armed conflict. Without peace we cannot pursue our calling to unity.

4. The WCC – a fellowship of churches – praying, working, and communicating with one another

We are implementing the CUV, the common understanding and vision of the WCC given as a result of the processes some 15-20 years ago: The WCC is a fellowship of churches. We have developed new methodologies of consensus-making, we have developed new methods of working together, we are developing new methods of communicating, we are building relations of many qualities, we are doing a lot together. I think we should pay even more attention to how important it is to be sharing life in solidarity, compassion, and joy, developing relations of spirituality, nurturing human relations, praying

together. The special commission on Orthodox participation in the WCC paid a lot of attention to how these prayers can happen in a way that all can participate in.

We are taking new initiatives in this respect in calling for prayers together, sharing prayers. The Global Day of Prayer to End Famine became a significant expression of this role of the WCC. As is the initiative to pray together for unity and just peace in Jerusalem and in any place in the world on Pentecost Monday this year – as we have common dates for Easter and Pentecost this year.

Unity has a lot to do with information and communication. The work we do for unity is not only something we should share information about, it is also something we pursue through means of communication. The many new initiatives of communication of our work and in our work have given many tangible results already in terms of much more attention to the work of the WCC, more participation, more responses and affirmation for the relevance of what we do, more attention to the different parts of the fellowship. Through the communication department we have extended the means of communication we have through our website, which probably should be renewed soon, and through an extensive use of social media in combination with more traditional channels. The sharing in the fellowship that happens through these new initiatives gives another experience and understanding of being a fellowship of churches.

We have also seen that more extensive use of communication tools, also in cooperation with the capacities of partners, we are able to move quickly, with flexibility and efficiency, and build capacities in our sister organizations and member churches for more effective communication.

The recent initiative coordinated by the WCC-EAA for a day of prayer to end famine showed the enormous potential coordinated and targeted communication can bring. More than 70 million people had seen and/or responded to the initiative. We are encouraged in the trust in the WCC for being the leading agent and the source of spirituality and insight in the themes to be addressed.

I am more and more convinced that ecumenism increasingly will be about communication, building relations through all the media available for us today. The access to electronic means of communication is almost the same all over the world, and plays an enormous role in developing the world relationships in the future – for good and for worse. We can use our potential based on our legacy of values, our relations, our possibilities to meet and to learn, as a great contribution to building relations in the time ahead of us.

In my study of ecumenical attitudes, I found that the WCC had developed a terminology (used a lot in other contexts) of the costly unity we seek (Olav Fykse Tveit: *The Truth We Owe Each Other*, WCC Publications, 2016). The attitude of "mutual accountability" is in my view absolutely basic in the biblical understanding of the church (cf. the image of the body of Christ and the call to accountability to one another in all the letters of the New Testament dealing with ecclesial questions). It is significant in the ecumenical movement, because it focuses on what we all can contribute to unity, and how the common efforts to express unity in diversity must also have a strong dimension of binding, accountable relationships. I find that the best ways of nurturing structures and attitudes of mutual accountability toward unity of the church is found in the World Council of Churches and in other conciliar forms of working together.

The world's instruments for justice, peace and development given in the UN and its many bodies are calling for mutual accountability to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). They are more interrelated than such goals have been before. They express in different ways a lot of our agenda for justice and peace as the WCC, and particularly how this agenda belongs to our work together with the many partners promoting international diakonia. We have now the privilege to discuss and promote a new document on ecumenical diakonia. This is a new momentum we shall not just let pass, but use as a

genuine opportunity to show how we are mutually accountable to the call to unity of the church serving the unity of humankind.

5. United in our efforts for the development of the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva

A very concrete challenge for our work together leading the WCC, is to make important further assessments and decisions for the building project for the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva. This is a very concrete task of the organization in our time, to secure the future use of this unique space for the WCC and the ecumenical movement, and the future economical sustainability of the WCC as an organization. It is time to be well updated of the decisions made by the governing bodies in the past, the work to follow up these decisions, and the alternatives at the table in this phase. We need to discuss with our partners, particularly Implenia, with whom we have signed a comprehensive contract, and among ourselves, to take this responsibility of moving the project forward towards the best result possible – and beginning first with the important matter of reimbursing the loan taken to address the former pension fund deficit, on the major financial challenges which the WCC has had.

The architects have been working on a master plan for the Green Village project which also asks us to consider "unity," this time in the context of architectural expression through form, materials, and landscaping. There is a need to ensure formally that the serenity and harmony of the original Green Village concepts will be implemented in the future, even when different architects and investors are called to be involved in the project in the next years. The firm *LRS Architectes* will seek our affirmation and guidance on the approach taken so far in defining the guidelines.

6. The call to unity – towards the 11th Assembly

The executive committee will start its reflection on what kind of assembly we want in 2021 and what should be the profile and the focus for this event. The assemblies are more than sessions for business and decision-making. Even more they are gatherings to discern the signs of the time, to assess the contribution of the WCC to the world and the life of the churches.

As we also pursue the midterm evaluation of what we have done and achieved so far, we should not underplay the role of being an agent for unity. My understanding of the call from Busan to be together on a Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace is that it is growing and materializing as a way to move together in the ecumenical movement that also offers new contributions to unity in its many dimensions. It can be seen as a theme, a uniting motto, a perspective that brings together our faith traditions and our common witness and service, an approach that calls for more openness, flexibility, and humility. Here we are willing to face the realities of our lives in the world, to share the gifts of our churches and traditions, and to work seriously on the challenges and the divisions we experience. We know that the ecumenical movement of love is the ecumenical movement of the cross and the ecumenical movement of the resurrection. These days we celebrate and give thanks that it is the living Spirit of God that creates every day the world, our lives as human beings, that also creates every day the church, and our lives as disciples of Christ.

I hope that as we continue our journey toward the 11th assembly, we are not shying away from reflections on our call to call one another to unity, even if we are not able to fulfil some of the aspirations and hopes for full, visible, ecclesial unity at the moment. I believe, though, that coming generations will be asking more for the expressions of unity in diversity, shaping the churches' contribution to more justice, more peace, more unity in a highly polarized, unjust, but also more interconnected world. The relevance of the WCC will not decrease but increase, as an instrument for setting new agendas and bringing new ideas and initiatives that can bring real hope to the world.

3.2. DISCUSSION OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

Dr Abuom offered thanks for the report of the general secretary. She offered particular thanks for its focus on unity in changing landscapes. The executive committee was invited to discuss the report of the general secretary.

Comments were offered on the following themes:

- Unity
- Consensus
- Green Village building project
- Palestine and Israel
- WCC Assembly theme

Unity

Dr Quawas offered thanks to the general secretary and agreed that the price of unity is costly, noting that the first person who paid that price was Bishop Eivind Berggrav, who helped to found the WCC at its first assembly in Amsterdam in 1948.

Bishop Azariah began with a note of appreciation that the report gave a wider picture about the whole subject of unity, and that the report reminded the committee once again that the primary purpose of the churches in the WCC is to call one another to visible unity.

He did wonder where the WCC as a fellowship of churches fit into these two dimensions of unity that the general secretary expressed – unity of the churches and the unity of humankind which is wider, and is an objective of the United Nations and non-governmental organizations and so on. What is the uniqueness of the WCC?

H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Nifon of Targoviste offered thanks to the general secretary but said he did not agree that the unity in Christ of humanity is a great challenge. As Christians and as messengers of Christ we cannot believe otherwise, because our faith in Christ is that which achieves unity in the creation.

Metropolitan Nifon also reflected that as the central committee meets only every two years some kind of guidelines and a strong orientation of all priorities the ecumenical activities in the WCC is needed. This is why he is very grateful that the general secretary has chosen to debate one item which is of vital importance for our ecumenical world, the theme of unity.

Dr Hutabarat-Lebang offered her thanks for the approach of the general secretary to focus on unity. It is a very timely theme for Indonesia, where there are many church divisions. At the same time, unity should not be confused with uniformity. How do we respect the differences and keep moving together? This is especially difficult with the politicization of religion and where differences become instruments to gain certain agendas of certain groups.

Dr Abuom asked that in the reflection of celebrating 70 years of the WCC, we reflect on what it means today to call ourselves into visible unity and the visibility of humankind in structures that are falling apart. In global structures that are dominated and still controlled by a small minority, whether you are in the global south or the global north, can we really discuss unity of the church and unity of humankind in

absence of the fundamental society and political structures of our society and therefore our historical heritage?

Dr Tveit responded to the questions and shared that this discussion about what we mean by unity, and why it is on the side-track of our discussions, and how the various issues are inter-connected was extremely enriching. He hopes these are the points we can make in further discussions. How are these dividing forces and uniting forces? He also wanted to ask how the unity of the church can open up these discussions for humankind.

Consensus decision-making

Dr Quawas asked for some explanation about the sentence in the report that reads, "…in the WCC is that we do not demand consensus in all questions, and that we accept that we do not have the significant level of shared faith and order to express our unity in Christ fully and visibly". He reflected that always demanding consensus is very important especially since we have been part of implementing the consensus issue.

The general secretary responded that not all questions are on the table at the moment, but those questions that are on the table, do deserve consensus. It is also important to acknowledge that, for instance, we do not have a full consensus on Faith and Order which we need for unity.

Green Village building project

Dr Quawas agreed that for the Green Village project, it is still not clear all decisions and the contracts and that will be needed for the project. He hoped that by the end of this meeting there will be further clarity on this matter.

Palestine and Israel

Dr Quawas was happy with the recent meeting that took place in Jerusalem, and that it was documented for the first time that it happened in Jerusalem and not in Geneva. He shared that this is an important issue for churches in his region, in reference to unity.

He also thanked the general secretary for the clear position taken by the general secretary and the executive committee and the WCC as a whole about Palestine and Israel. He reflected that this is a very clear situation in which it will stop all of those who do not support the position of the WCC and who misunderstand the WCC's intentions.

WCC Assembly theme

Metropolitan Nifon reflected that when the theme for the 2013 Busan assembly was chosen, it was a lively debate. Many people were disappointed because the theme did not contain the word "unity". He shared that no assembly of the WCC since 1948 has had the title with that kind of purpose, and this is why some of the people were very disappointed in that.

However, it was a great feeling to have chosen that particular theme by consensus. For this reason, he wanted to underline the importance of the general secretary's choice of unity in a wonderful way. Many of the churches in the Orthodox world have a careful consideration of the ecumenical involvement today. This is why talking about unity with theological content is a very good solution at least for this period of time. He expressed his gratefulness.

Metropolitan Gennadios offered thanks for the report of the general secretary and shared that he is glad that there was the revisiting on the assembly themes. Here, he reflected, there is a need for a new search for unity. In the history of the ten assemblies, there were a variety of themes focused on grace and justice. In the history of the last assemblies, it was difficult for the assembly planning committee to decide if unity should be part of the theme, or if unity should be the theme of the whole assembly instead of being part of the sub-theme. He believes that we cannot say today that God unites and that the enemies divide. We must avoid repetition of what was done in previous assemblies. A lot of work was done. What is missing in the 70 years? After 70 years we are not in consensus and what we mean by unity of the church is not still clear. We need to differentiate our theological understanding the meaning and what we mean by the unity of the church.

4. Exposure Visits and Encounters

4.1. WOMEN'S DINNER

On 8 June, the women present at the meeting gathered together for dinner for fellowship and discussing gender and other related issues.

4.2. GLOBAL FUND BUILDING VISIT

On 9 June, executive committee members were given an opportunity to visit the new building where the head offices of the Global Fund Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (the Global Fund) will be located, next door to the current WCC offices. The committee was given a tour of the building by Implenia, the real estate development company, and the *LRS Architectes.*

On the tour, it was noted that in November 2015, the trees on the site were cut down and cleared to make way for the new building. In January 2016, construction began on-site.

4.3. ENCOUNTER WITH WCC STAFF

On 9 June, the executive committee had an encounter with WCC staff at the Ecumenical Centre. It began with a communal time of sharing coffee, tea, and refreshments with WCC staff and executive committee members.

Mr Stanley Noffsinger, director in the office of the general secretariat, welcomed everyone to this time of encounter and shared that while the committee members interact with only some of the WCC staff on a regular basis all staff members are involved in preparation for governance meetings and they all help to make the meeting run. Some staff are involved in technical support, preparing documents, or doing other behind-the-scenes work.

He then introduced staff by their areas of work: information technology, house services, human resources, finance, income monitoring and development, communications and language service, administrative support to the general secretariat, programmes and communications, library and archives, Bossey guest house staff, and programme staff.

Mr Michael West (WCC publisher) invited all executive members to note the new WCC publications that are available and currently on display; he shared that they would be welcome to take copies back to their member churches.

The general secretary then welcomed everyone into the Visser 't Hooft Hall. He noted that this room is where many big decisions of the WCC have been made and added that the interaction between staff and executive members is an important dynamic.

5. Preparations for the 11th WCC Assembly

5.1. ASSEMBLY MATTERS

H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima moderated a hearing session.

Dr Tveit shared that this is the first of two sessions planned for this meeting to discuss assembly preparations. The idea is to have an update on what has happened so far, a more open and general discussion first and then later talk more specifically about the venue. In addition there will be representatives from churches who are proposing to host the assembly.

The executive committee was asked to discuss and confirm the approach to assembly preparations as described in this report.

Mr Noffsinger shared that since the executive committee meeting in Shanghai and Nanjing, China, preparations for the 11th Assembly have been progressing. The timeline as established by the central committee meeting in Trondheim 2016 as outlined in Doc. No. GEN PRC 02 *On the Way to the WCC 11th Assembly* is being maintained. H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima who serves as the moderator of the APC.

A deadline extension for member churches to indicate their willingness to host the assembly resulted in two completed responses. The leadership of the central committee (LCC) met in March and offered significant reflection on the purpose, function, and importance of the assembly in the life of the WCC.

Re-scheduling of the first Assembly Planning Committee (APC) from 2017 until 2018 provided accommodation for further discussion with the LCC and the executive committee on assembly matters. It additionally provided coordination of both the thematic possibilities and a venue recommendation by APC to the CC in 2018.

In addition, in the report of the general secretary for this meeting, initial reflections on the thematic focus of the assembly were introduced.

The venue possibilities include:

- The Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD) submitted an invitation to the WCC for hosting the 11th Assembly in Germany. This was reported in the November 2016 meeting of the executive committee in China.
- From South Africa, the Dutch Reformed Church (NGK) and the Uniting Reformed Church in South Africa (URCSA) jointly submitted the invitation in consideration of the Cape Town International Conference Centre (CTICC) in Cape Town, South Africa.

Site assessments represented in both invitations will be undertaken prior to the meeting of the APC. Final assembly venue selection will be made at the 2018 central committee meeting.

There are still some nominations to the APC from ecumenical partners pending which will be secured in time for the APC meeting. The first APC meeting will take place at Bossey, 1-6 February 2018 (arrivals 31 January, departures on 6 or 7 February). The second APC meeting will take place in Geneva on 22-25 June 2018 immediately following the 2018 central committee meeting. In February the nature and style of the assembly will be discussed. Initial feedback on proposed venues and some reflection on possible themes will take place as well as working on a proposal for seat allocation. There will also be a review of the recommendations from the Busan Assembly Finance Committee in preparation for decisions to be made by the 2018 meeting of central committee, and consideration for the financial framework supporting the assembly. In June, following the selection of the venue, the APC will formulate the proposal for the assembly theme with input from the representative regional ecumenical organization – in conjunction with the central committee.

The Assembly Worship Planning Committee (AWPC) is scheduled to meet two times in 2018. The first will occur in April and the second in December 2018 or in January 2019. Their task will be to work with the nature and style proposal from the APC to develop framework for the worship experiences at the assembly, identify materials needed and work with the theme and venue decision to prepare worship details for the assembly.

H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima offered thanks for this report and invited comments and questions form the committee.

H.E. Archbishop Dr Vicken Aykazian (Armenian Apostolic Church (Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin)) observed that on the worship committee, there were no members from the Oriental Orthodox Church. He noted that there should be both Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox participants. Metropolitan Gennadios shared that they can bring this proposal to the sub-committee, and then come back with a proposal.

Dr Tveit noted that an assembly is not only about the dates in 2021 or about people being gathered somewhere, but it is rather part of the life-stream of the WCC. Currently we are in the preparation and planning phase. An assembly is part of the life-cycle of the WCC and is the event when all of the churches gather together. We will start the assembly preparations now, and it will be an item on the agenda every time we meet until 2021.

It is also a journey for our member churches and for the wider ecumenical movement in which the executive and the APC have a special role. This meeting can be used for brainstorming without binding ourselves to anything. This is a privilege and even before the theme and venue are chosen, the executive committee can reflect on what kind of assembly the WCC needs.

The assembly is the supreme legislative governing body of the WCC and some decisions can only be made at an assembly. We will need to reflect on what we will prepare for the assembly. Last time, there was a comprehensive decision made about governance. This time, there will be other decisions we need to make. This preparation will need to be made by the central committee, and we have two more meetings to do this.

An assembly is also an expression of the living expression of the WCC.

An assembly has specific functions which are about strengthening the one ecumenical movement according to the WCC Constitution. This was an important part of the preparations for the 10th assembly.

At that time and for this next assembly, the APC had a wider membership than only representatives from our member churches and included ecumenical partners.

An assembly has many dimensions: plenaries, workshops, ecumenical conversations (which were new in Busan), visitors to give greetings, and ways of expressing today's world and ecumenical movement and the life of the churches. It also includes representatives of other faith communities, not only Christians.

In terms of making it a process, it should also conclude by electing a central committee. This is a process that needs to be prepared very carefully. We also need to make sure that churches are involved in starting to nominate their participants, and also to start contributing to finances of the assembly.

The general secretary shared that in the WCC, they are working on the common understanding of vision as a fellowship of churches. The permanent committee on consensus and collaboration (PCCC) assists in this and goes through the assembly into the next period.

Since the Busan assembly the WCC has worked by facilitating, inviting, and exploring what the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace (PJP) is and this will continue to the next assembly. How does it bring something into the assembly that also goes beyond the assembly? The PJP is more than a programmatic theme for eight years. It will also be important how we harvest from this process. How do we bring in new ideas?

The year 2021 is almost half-way until 2030, that is half-way for the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This is an enormous, ambitious, and critical agenda for the world and the WCC almost has the same goals. How do we contribute to the agenda of sustainable development in the world?

The WCC needs to connect our agenda to the kinds of agendas like the Paris agreement on climate change. Our reflections about unity must bring into consideration not only theological, but also political dimensions of this very important issue about what kind of unity to promote as churches in the world today.

Metropolitan Gennadios noted that the assembly is always an ecumenical event. It is an event not only for the member churches of the WCC but also for the entire ecumenical movement. An assembly has always had a celebration, a spiritual part with prayers, and a spiritual encounter among various denominations, professional streams, and families. It has business according to constitutional matters including elections of the new leadership and central committee.

It is critical to balance these two aspects – celebration and business – and in an effort to minimize the impact of the business of the assembly they tried to have the nominations take place part in the first part of the assembly, so that the second part of the assembly could be more relaxed after the central committee was named. That way, the assembly could be more peaceful and more spiritual.

An assembly also gives an opportunity for churches to express their own understanding. You cannot reach to 70 years without finding at least some kind of common understanding of unity of the church. An assembly is also a living possibility of the consensus process. It also allows for a programmatic evaluation and to give guidelines for churches for the future and what way they should continue to be together for the unity of the church.

He also shared that an ecumenical gathering, such an assembly, brings people closer together, and enables people to make friends. We see our differences but we also see how we can be more understandable to

each other. Finally, an assembly also shows our divisions, our obstacles, and how to overcome the possibilities of the past.

Dr Abuom offered thanks for these thoughts reminding the group that the context of an assembly is shaped by the host as well as by global context. She then invited other comments from the committee.

Archbishop Vicken shared that we need to look forward to know what kind of message we have to share with a world that is divided and that is going in the wrong direction. We need to give the message so that the world will listen and pay attention.

Metropolitan Nifon inquired what new elements will distinguish this assembly from the others. He thought that the ideas for planning the assembly should be creative and that it was important to find out through our reflections and our thinking and our real imagination. He asked whether the assembly was meant to be a message to the world or more for the spiritual experience of the people who participate. It is critical that the business affairs do not take up too much time of the time of the assembly. Busan was a very good assembly but we need to aspire to something better each time.

Bishop Azariah reminded the group that every assembly also expressed the reality of the context of the world and of our churches. This is something we have been able to address very pointedly in some assemblies. He himself had been very influenced in social action issues by his participation at the Nairobi assembly in 1975 and Rev. Dr Philip Potters inspiring messages and energy, especially with regard to issues of racism

Ms Pirri-Simonian shared her experience at Nairobi (1975) and emphasized the need for the inspirational voices of women and youth to feed into the assembly.

Dr Gardner shared that what was important to him was how as a fellowship, and how as a body, we understand what is happening in our world and in our context and how we respond appropriately and prophetically to our world in our time. He echoed the comments and added that young people today are far more radical while also being more practical as they look at the world and decide how they ought to be engaged in it.

Prof. Dr Marina Kolovopoulou (Church of Greece) noted that she reflected on the theme of the first assembly of the WCC in Amsterdam (1948) “Man’s Disorder and God’s Design”. All the major themes of the first assembly were around the role of the church in God’s design, the business of the church in God’s design, the church and the disorder of society, and the church and the universal disorder. Since the WCC is 70 years old, this means a maturity and wisdom. Has the self-understanding from Amsterdam, changed? If it has, to what point? If it has changed, would it be wise to have a new expression of what we are today after 70 years? She observed that the vision has remained a vision and that unity has been very far away from the unity that was put forward in Amsterdam. If as a wise body, we put down the main points of today and clarify that this can be done, and this is a dream, but what matters is what I can do. If we had this kind of clarification, it would be an example of wisdom from the WCC.

Archpriest Mikhail Goundiaev said that the assembly could be a prophetic voice of the WCC. He reflected that especially the contemporary world and the circumstances in which we live now and are very different from the time of the 1st assembly. The world has changed very much. The perceptions of order by nations are being artificially made by the means of mass media. It is hard to find a place where we can come together and rally to unveil all of this lack of truth about our perceptions about each other. This is way the WCC could move to where Christians could share their honest attitudes to each other and try to reconcile this divided world. This is the biggest task: not to reconcile the churches, but what is going on

in the world today. This should probably be a key issue of the next assembly: to reconcile the world and to overcome man's disorder. We live in the circumstances of man-created disorder.

Metropolitan Dr Mor Geevarghese Coorilos (Syrian Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East) recalled that the New Delhi Assembly (1963) there was a historic integration between the International Missionary Council (IMC) with the WCC. The spirit of integration was that mission and unity went together and would find themselves at the heart of the WCC agenda. He reflected that we can have unity at the heart of the assembly, but not detached from mission and witness. He shared Jesus' prayer for unity: that all may be one so that the world may believe. He hoped that mission would again be a central theme in the next assembly.

Bishop Simo Peura commented that the European context had changed remarkably in 20-30 years. The big issues like climate change, refugees, and terrorism take center stage while 30 years ago there was cold war. These fears are alive among us and much more than they ever were before. Europe had been a very secure place, but that has changed dramatically now. Europeans can now better understand the fear of people living in other continents. He concluded saying encouragement and hope have to be emphasized.

Dr Abuom offered a summary. Firstly, what will be the cutting-edge message that will give hope to our desperate, hopeless, divided world? Will that be prophetic? It needs to be a message reminding the fellowship of who we are, why we were founded, and where we need to be going. Secondly, we have heard the need to ensure that there diverse voices engaged at the table of the assembly, even those we do not like. Thirdly, the assembly is a celebration and affirmation of life.

The general secretary offered thanks for these reflections. We are called to create an assembly that will give hope to our children's generation - they need to see hope. An assembly must be a voice of Christian hope, and particularly, this hope must be a hope for unity, and not unity in a forced way but unity in a real and spiritual way that will change the realities between us and that also gives hopes to our children's generation.

He reflected that we should also be courageous about the role of the WCC in the past and in the future and to be open to new ways that it can be important. Most of the participants at the 2021 assembly will communicate through mobile devises - how do we involve the many? The pre-assembly model has been to involve all the voices, how do we involve this as a process where all can participate? This is an assembly that will bring something else and is also about how we relate to one another.

Metropolitan Gennadios shared that this session is historical because the process for the next assembly has started already with this brainstorming discussion. Reality and discernment must accompany us during the core periods of preparation – not only for the APC but for all the member churches and the broader ecumenical movement.

Dr Abuom offered thanks for this session. She invited the committee into the process of praying together and seeking and discerning God's will for this 11th assembly, particularly as we move into the nitty-gritty of planning and all the people who will be part of this process.

5.2. PROPOSALS FOR THE ASSEMBLY VENUE

Dr Abuom moderated a hearing session and thanked both presenters from South Africa and Germany for the willingness of their churches to invite the WCC 11th assembly to their countries.

WCC president from South Africa, Prof. Dr Mary Anne Plaatjies van Huffel, along with members of her delegation, were introduced:

- Rev. Dr Gustav Claassen (Dutch Reformed Church)
- Prof. Dr Mary Anne Plaatjies van Huffel (Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa)
- Mr Adriaan Fourie (Cape Town & Western Cape Convention Bureau)

Proposal from the Churches in South Africa

Dr Plaatjies van Huffel reminded the group that the central committee approved the application for WCC membership from the Dutch Reformed Church during its meeting in June 2016 in Trondheim. The Dutch Reformed Church (NGK) and the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa (URCSA) offer the presentation jointly after which Mr Adriaan Fourie (Cape Town & Western Cape Convention Bureau) will share about logistics.

She stated that the NGK and the URCSA have secured ecumenical support for hosting the assembly and are able to offer the logistical support needed. The Evangelical Alliance of South Africa (TEASA) represents 4 million Evangelical, Pentecostal and Charismatic Christians; the South African Council of Churches (SACC) represents 17 million Christians; and together the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa (UPCSA), the NGK, the URCSA, and the Anglican represent more than 6 million Christians. The churches involved in the bid include:

- Dutch Reformed Church of Southern Africa (2 million)
- Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa (1 million)
- South African Council of Churches (17 million)
- Evangelical Alliance of South Africa (4 million)
- World Communion of Reformed Churches
- Unity Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa (700 000)
- Jerusalem Church of South Africa
- Anglican Church of Southern Africa (1.6 million)
- Conference of Independent African Churches (14 million)
- All African Conference of Churches (120 million)

Rev. Dr Gustav Claassen (NGK) therefore shared that this is not only a bid from the two churches present at the meeting but that they speak on behalf of the ecumenically minded churches and partners in southern Africa and their bid is made on behalf of Africa.

Dr Plaatjies van Huffel said that it is important because in Africa there are many peace initiatives and many efforts related to justice. They want to direct the attention of the WCC in a time when the demographics of Christianity are changing and it is important to host the next WCC assembly in Africa. In 1910, two-thirds of the world Christians lived in Europe. Today only one-quarter of Christians live in Europe. But, she noted, one out of every four Christians lives in sub-Saharan Africa. There is a record growth of Christianity in southern Africa, and this could be one of the reasons why the WCC would choose to hold the next assembly in Africa, and specifically South Africa. It is very important for Africa to host this very important meeting in 2021 because of the research that in 2025 the centre of Christianity would have moved to Africa.

A brief history of ecumenical involvement of the two churches was then presented. Southern Africa is a good location for a WCC assembly because Africa is a region that experiences exponential growth of Christianity and the numbers of churches, and many of the churches are members of the WCC. Africa is a continent that has struggled against all forms of domination, undermining, oppression, colonialism and imperialism, and other injustices. Facilities available are perfectly adequate for such a gathering and hosting the WCC Assembly in South Africa will underscore, more than anything else, the WCC pilgrimage for justice and peace with the people of South Africa. It could bring renewed inspiration and impetus to the work of the churches for reconciliation, just peace and restoration.

Dr Abuom offered thanks for this presentation and opened the discussion for further questions or comments.

Dr Gardner asked about the financial aspect or the contributions from the churches in South Africa with respect to hosting or offsetting some of the expenses from the WCC perspective. Dr Plaatjies van Huffel stated that many of the churches in Africa are poor churches and some cannot afford to host an assembly of such a great magnitude. However, she shared that what they could do jointly, with the help of the conference bureau, will be to host the cultural event. The estimated costs for this will be Euro 2-3.5 million based on an estimate of 5,000 participants.

Mr Adriaan Fourie added that they have started the process with governmental and regional institutions to apply for funding. They are doing the programme to come to a financial model that is in favour of both parties, but also recognize limited means within the African church environment. In response to a question about the South African government support Mr Fourie noted that support can be made available both on a national and regional level and that his colleagues are more capable of saying the link between policy and government. A point was made that even with government support there would be no influence on WCC because of the political situation in South Africa. Having an assembly in South Africa could, however, provide continuation to the work already being done by churches on pushing issues like reconciliation, justice and restorative justice.

Proposal from the Churches in Germany

Dr Abuom invited Bishop Petra Bosse-Huber to present, on behalf of the churches in Germany.

Bishop Bosse-Huber spoke about the current religious and ecumenical landscape in Germany.

Christianity is the largest religion in Germany, and about 35% of the population are non-religious. In recent decades, the proportion of unchurched people and affiliates of other religions has grown in Germany. However, the structures of the people's church (Volkskirche) have remained in place across the whole country. The churches play just as much of an important role in education and training, as they do in the provision of cultural activities and social ministry. Christian social ethics continues to make an essential contribution to the promotion of humane ways of living together in our society.

She then gave an overview of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD) noting that the EKD is a member of the Churches Together in Germany (ACK), a body which was founded a few months before the Amsterdam Assembly in 1948. The EKD has ecumenical relations with the Roman Catholic Church, Orthodox churches, and the Union of Evangelical Free Churches (VEF), among others.

The ecumenical ministry of the EKD reaches abroad as well and the church is very involved in and committed itself to the worldwide ecumenical movement as a member of the World Council of Churches (WCC) with a view to serving unity in Jesus Christ and to promote peace, justice and the preservation of creation. It is involved in European matters through its involvement in the Conference of European Churches (CEC) and in the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE). The church also maintains contact and communication with a number of other faith communities. In its cooperation and conversations with Jews and Muslims, religious and theological issues are discussed, but historical, cultural and topical political aspects also play an important role.

In terms of the invitation to the WCC, the EKD is asking other churches in Germany to join in hosting the 11th Assembly. WCC member churches in Germany and the members of Churches Together in Germany certainly have already expressed a vital interest and offered their support.

She said an assembly in Germany should assist in witnessing to the country

- as a place aware of its responsibility towards the world.
- as a place of hope for reformation and transformation.
- as a place of a deep spiritual need to learn from others coming to us as migrants or sharing with us life on this planet.
- as a place of people immigrating and emigrating.
- as a place where mission and church renewal are needed.

More than 50 years after the last assembly in Europe (Uppsala 1968), it is time for Germany (and Europe) to reflect on its ecumenical vision in a new frame.

Within the country the EKD is looking for a place where the WCC assembly will be visible and recognizable in the public sphere.

In terms of financial contributions towards a WCC assembly in Germany, the EKD has built into their 2018-2021 budget reserves for the assembly with a yearly amount of 800,000 Euro. More support will also be secured from other churches, organizations, and the federal and regional government.

Dr Abuom offered thanks for this presentation and opened the floor for further questions and comments.

Metropolitan Nifon asked about which city in Germany and Bishop Bosse-Huber responded that they have a list of towns which are big enough, and that have enough rooms and facilities to hold the gathering but that the location is not yet decided. Three of the regional churches have offered their locations.

In response to some questions, Bishop Bosse-Huber said that one of the main reasons to invite WCC to Germany for its assembly is to publicly celebrate something very ecumenical and very international and remind the people of the role and possibilities of the church and faith-based actions for justice and peace.

The general secretary expressed his thanks to both presenters. It is a privilege to receive such offers without which the preparation of an assembly would be impossible. The next step is that there will be a small delegation to visit those who have made offers in order to gather more information that can be presented to the executive committee in November 2017, and to the assembly planning committee in February 2018. But, according to our rules, the final decision will be made by the central committee.

5.3. DEBRIEF OF PRESENTATION PROPOSALS ON THE ASSEMBLY VENUE

Bishop Dr Mary Ann Swenson moderated a closed session.

(Bishop Bosse-Huber excused herself from participating in this particular session, as she was one of the people who had presented a proposal on behalf of the churches in Germany.)

Bishop Swenson opened the discussion by reminding the committee that no decisions would be made now, but that it would be wise to have some conversations and to hear reflections on the proposals.

The comments made include the following

- Cape Town as such a beautiful city would provide and amazing experience for the participants but finances remain a concern.
- The financial support for the Busan assembly from the Korean churches was significant and this contributed to such a good assembly experience.

- It was also said that the venue should not only be decided based on the financial contributions of a church or churches in a country as this sets and uncomfortable precedent for the future. Rather the different fund-raising possibilities should be considered for each location.
- The work on logistics is further developed for Cape Town as the exact location in Germany has not yet been chosen.
- The ecumenical history in terms of struggles against Apartheid in South Africa is significant and inspirational.
- The last assembly held in Africa was in 1998 in Harare, Zimbabwe but the European churches have not had the chance to host an assembly since Uppsala in 1968.
- Whichever venue is chosen special care must be taken to ensure that all participants receive a visa.
- Some felt that Cape Town needed the witness to the country and region that a WCC assembly inevitably brings to the context. Others saw that Europe, especially in the light of the current crises – decreasing involvement and interest in the church, issues of migration, Brexit, etc. – would also need such a testimony at this time.

The general secretary clarified that while the assembly is an event for the WCC, it is also an event in a country. The assembly needs to work for the WCC as a fellowship of churches. The visa issue is very important, but no matter in which context the meeting is held, we are gathered as a world-wide fellowship. He added that we need to recognize where the WCC will be in 2021. An assembly costs millions of CHF. We should not overestimate finances as a criterion for selection, but we should not underestimate its importance either. This issue primarily affects participation in that WCC does not wish any of the churches to be excluded from participating because of financial reasons.

He added that by 2021 hopefully we will have started the building project and come into a phase where we do not have the same income from our tenants that we have today. This also impacts our general reserves. This phase of the building project, in addition to our normal budget, adds pressure to the funding of the assembly.

He reminded the group that there are other ways of involving the churches in either context through the organization of a central committee or other high-profile events in one of the venues. It is important to see where WCC can have the most impact. We are more globalized now and therefore, wherever we are, we need to address more than the context where the assembly is being held.

6. Finances

6.1. FIRST PRESENTATION ON FINANCES

Bishop Swenson moderated a hearing session and invited Ms Elaine Dykes (WCC, director of finance) to begin the presentations about finances.

6.1.1. FINANCE OVERVIEW

Financial highlights 2016

- Results reflect a decrease in funds and reserves of CHF 1.3 million (2015: increase in funds and reserves CHF 0.7 million)
- Contributions income CHF 17.5 million (2015: CHF 18.6 million)

- Self-generated income represents almost 30% of total income
- Net deficit at Bossey guest house and conference centre CHF121,000 (2015: surplus of CHF 33,000)
- No programme deficits; all programme expenditure covered by contributions or programme fund balances
- General reserves close at CHF 7 million (2015: CHF 6.9 million) after transfers to assembly fund.

Results 2016 compared with budget

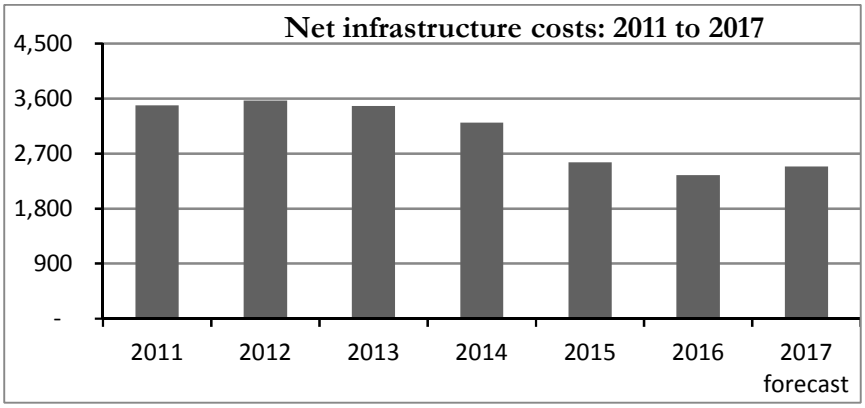
- The overall decrease in funds and reserves of CHF 1.3 million compares to a budgeted decrease of CHF 1 million
- Total income CHF 25 million, slightly under budget of CHF 25.4 million
- Programme fund balances were CHF 1.3 million higher than budgeted at 1 January 2016; and this higher level has been sustained
- Programme direct costs and staff costs were close to budget at CHF 15.8 million (2015: 7.7% under budget at CHF 15.2 million)
- Central Committee net costs at budget at CHF 0.6 million
- Infrastructure charge to programme at CHF 2.4 million, or CHF 0.4 million under budget

Results 2016 compared with budget

CHF 000	**Unrestricted & Designated Fund**		**Restricted Fund**		**Total**	
	Dec 2016	*Budget*	**Dec 2016**	*Budget*	**Dec 2016**	*Budget*
Income						
Membership & UDI	3,928	*4,041*	-	-	3,928	*4,041*
Programme contributions	-	-	13,597	*14,088*	13,597	*14,088*
Investment and currency	(82)	*15*	405	*44*	323	*59*
Rentals, sales & misc income	6,746	*6,590*	414	*671*	7,160	*7,261*
Distribution of unrestricted inc	(3,891)	*(4,041)*	3,891	*4,041*	-	-
Total Income	**6,701**	***6,605***	**18,307**	***18,844***	**25,008**	***25,449***
Expenditure						
Direct programme and other costs	5,936	*6,010*	7,732	*7,969*	13,668	*13,979*
Staff costs	4,539	*4,343*	8,114	*8,154*	12,653	*12,497*
Total costs before redistribution	10,475	*10,353*	15,846	*16,123*	26,321	*26,476*

Redistributed costs	(2,352)	*(2,790)*	2,352	*2,790*	-	-
Internal (sales)/purchases	(565)	*(550)*	565	*550*	-	-
Total costs after redistribution	**7,558**	***7,013***	**18,763**	***19,463***	**26,321**	***26,476***
Surplus/(deficit)	**(857)**	***(408)***	**(456)**	***(619)***	**(1,313)**	***(1,027)***
Transfers from/(to) funds	283	*50*	(220)	-	63	*50*
Transfers between funds	1	-	(1)	-	-	-
Surplus/(deficit)	**(573)**	***(358)***	**(677)**	***(619)***	**(1,250)**	***(977)***
Opening balance	(2,558)	*(2,149)*	15,310	*13,863*	12,752	*11,714*
Closing balance	(3,131)	*(2,507)*	14,633	*13,244*	11,502	*10,737*

Net infrastructure charge 2016 reduced by CHF 1.1 million (31%) compared to 2011



Balance sheet 2016 analysis

- Insurance value of WCC's buildings is CHF 108 million, while book value is reflected at CHF 39 million; CHF 69 million value isundisclosed, except in notes to the financial statements
- Total loans: CHF 47 million (2015: CHF 47.4 million)
- Backing general reserves: CHF 8 million held in Swiss franc deposits and short-term CHF bond fund to preserve capital
- Continued high liquidity, and demonstrated coverage of general reserves and designated funds by cash and investments

Balance Sheet December 2016

Assets	**CHF 000s**	**Related Obligation**	**CHF 000s**	**Net assets/ (obligations)**
Land & buildings	38,783	Mortgage loans & long term deferred income	49,837	(11,054)

Investments	11,404	Endowment Funds	9,110	2,294
Cash and cash equivalents	11,661	Programme Funds	4,181	7,480
Other current assets	1,954	Current liabilities	2,091	(137)
		Long-term provisions	372	(372)
Total net assets/(liabilities) available after deducting obligations				**(1,789)**

Covering reserves composed as follows:			
Restricted fund for fixed assets	1,592		
Designated fund for fixed assets	11,354		
Deficit fund to be covered by development project	(23,748)	(10,802)	
Designated fund for building project	1,697		
Designated programme fund	283		
General reserve	7,033	9,013	**(1,789**)

6.1.2. INCOME DEVELOPMENT

Mr Douglas Chial (WCC manager, Income Monitoring and Development and PMER) presented about income development.

Income Development – Results from 2014-2017

Total contributions income since 2014
- 2014 – CHF 20.4 million
- 2015 – CHF 18.6 million
- 2016 – CHF 17.5 million
- 2017 – CHF 17.6 million (forecast)

Reductions since 2014
- Currency exchange – impact from 2015 onwards
- Reduced funding – impact of back donor funding – ICCO, DCA, FCA, UCS, UCC

Strengthened funding and new sources since 2014
- Member churches are giving more
  - 80 churches gave more in 2014 than 2012
  - 113 churches gave more in 2015 than 2012
  - 145 churches gave more in 2016 than 2015
- Nigeria – with the Norwegian government
- Syria – with the Swiss government and Swiss churches (HEKS)

- Iraq – with the Norwegian government and Norwegian churches (NCA)
- HIV/AIDs – with the United States government and UNAIDS
- EAPPI – with UNICEF and the Hassib Sabbagh Foundation
- Peace-building through social justice – with the Norwegian government and International Labour Organization (ILO)

Income Development – Learnings for 2018-2021

- **Relationships with member churches and ecumenical partners**
  Churches and partners want to be more involved in the work of the WCC – requires advanced planning and more coordination

- **Reporting and communicating**
  Churches and partners want more evidence-based impact of the work of the fellowship – telling the stories and documenting results

- **Importance of programme staff**
  It is necessary to strengthen staff capacity for planning, monitoring and reporting – especially to access new fund

- **Not all contributions are the same – different strategies needed**

Refined strategies, targets and indicators are needed for different types of income

  - General contributions from member churches
  - Core programme funding from churches and partners
  - Activity-specific funding from churches and partners
  - Scholarship support from congregations (Bossey)
  - Project funding from governments and UN agencies
  - Cooperative support based on collaboration and joint activities
  - Assembly contributions
  - New sources of funding

Income Development – Trends influencing 2018-2021

Cooperation with churches – sharing resources
Faith and Order – active engagement of commission members in the work of the secretariat; meetings hosted by churches in Romania, Poland, Cyprus, Bahamas and South Africa

Shared programming with ecumenical partners – planning together
Council for World Mission – not providing core grant, but implementing work together on mission, evangelism, theological education, inter-religious cooperation and economic justice

Accessing new income ecumenically – applying together
DanChurchAid – not able to increase funding, but helping to access global grants such as EU funding for intercultural dialogue and peace-building in South Sudan

Ecumenical cooperation for sustainable development – SDGs 2030
WCC, ACT Alliance and LWF cooperating as a "global faith coalition for sustainable development", with each taking a lead on

  - *Ecumenical* Diakonia – study document *(WCC)*
  - *Religion and Development – task force (ACT)*

- *Waking the Giants – churches involvement in the 2030 UN agenda for sustainable development (LWF)*

Income Development – Contributions 2018-2021

General targets

- Membership Contributions – CHF 4.0 million annually with more churches contributing each year
- Programme Contributions – CHF 13.5 to CHF 14.5 million annually with new sources being explored
- Assembly Contributions – up to CHF 5.0 million by 2021

Issues to address

- Programme development – strengthening staff capacity for project planning, monitoring and management
- Reporting – communicating the impact of the work of the fellowship
- Prioritization – making the most of limited human resources

6.1.3. FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2018-2021: APPROACH

Mr Mark Johnson (WCC manager, finance) presented the forecast and financial strategy.

Forecast 2017 compared to Budget 2017

CHF 000	Budget 2017	Forecast 2017	Variance fav./ (unfav.)
Income			
Membership & UDI	3,914	*3,901*	*(13)*
Programme contributions	14,449	*13,679*	*(770)*
Investment and currency	357	*357*	-
Rentals, sales & misc income	7,063	*7,089*	*26*
Distribution of unrestricted inc	-	-	
Total Income	**25,783**	***25,026***	*(757)*
Expenditure			
Direct programme and other costs	13,689	*13,406*	*283*
Staff costs	12,476	*12,227*	*249*
Total costs after redistribution	**26,165**	***25,633***	*532*
Surplus/(deficit)	**(382)**	***(607)***	*(225)*
Transfers from/(to) funds	-	*(30)*	*(30)*
Surplus/(deficit)	**(382)**	***(637)***	*(255)*
Opening balance	11,129	*11,502*	*373*
Closing balance	10,747	*10,865*	*118*

Programme contributions net reduction 5%:
CHF m
0.3 UNAIDS adjusted towards 2018
0.1 CWM received in 2016
0.1 EDAN
0.1 Hasib Sabbagh Foundation
0.1 Unfavourable FX (EUR/CHF)

Net cost reductions are related to adjustments above, but also drawn on increased programme fund balances available

Financial results to April 2017 compared to forecast

- An overall surplus of CHF 994,000 is reported for the period to April 2017 with total income at 37% of forecast and total expenditure at 32% of forecast
- Staff and infrastructure costs were in line with forecast while programme expenditure was below budget, repeating the pattern of previous years for this period

- The Bossey guest house reported a deficit of CHF 178,000 to April (deficit at April 2016: CHF 164,000)
- Investment results were strong, generating total income of CHF 191,000 (53% of forecast)

Results to April 2017 compared to forecast

CHF 000	**Unrestricted & Designated Fund**		**Restricted Fund**		**Total**	
	April 2017	*Forecast*	**April 2017**	*Forecast*	**April 2017**	*Forecast*
Income						
Membership & UDI	1,079	*3,901*	-	-	1,079	*3,901*
Programme contributions	-	-	5,613	*13,679*	5,613	*13,679*
Investment and currency	(4)	*15*	195	*342*	191	*357*
Rentals, sales & misc income	2,221	*6,825*	76	*264*	2,297	*7,089*
Distribution of unrestricted inc	(1,023)	*(3,790)*	1,023	*3,790*	-	-
Total Income	**2,273**	***6,951***	**6,907**	***18,075***	**9,180**	***25,026***
Expenditure						
Direct programme and other costs	1,990	*6,099*	2,133	*7,307*	4,123	*13,406*
Staff costs	1,447	*4,319*	2,616	*7,908*	4,063	*12,227*
Total costs before redistribution	3,437	*10,418*	4,749	*15,215*	8,186	*25,633*
Redistributed costs	(884)	*(2,489)*	884	*2,489*	-	-
Internal (sales)/purchases	(121)	*(562)*	121	*562*	-	-
Total costs after redistribution	**2,432**	***7,367***	**5,754**	***18,266***	**8,186**	***25,633***
Surplus/(deficit)	**(159)**	***(416)***	**1,153**	***(191)***	**994**	***(607)***
Transfers from/(to) funds	-	-	-	*(30)*	-	*(30)*
Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-	-
Surplus/(deficit)	**(159)**	***(416)***	**1.153**	***(221)***	**994**	***(637)***

Opening balance	(3,381)	*(3,381)*	14,883	*14,883*	11,502	*11,502*
Closing balance	(3,540)	*(3,797)*	16,036	*14,662*	12,496	*10,865*

Actual 2016 - Forecast 2017 – Frameworks 2018 and 2019

- A view of the total WCC income and expenditure 2016 to 2019 is presented
- Contributions income is projected at about CHF 17.5 million each year, including World Mission Conference contributions
- The first transaction in the real estate project is sketched in the 2019 framework, with an increased depreciation charge (non-cash item) in 2018 and 2019, as partial demolition is planned
- The World Mission Conference is included in framework 2018 with expenditure at CHF 1.5 million
- Programme fund balances projected to fall to a record low of CHF 1.2 million at 31 December 2018
- General reserves projected to be above target across 2017 to 2019

Actual 2016
Forecast 2017
Framework 2018
Framework 2019

	Actual 2016	Forecast 2017	Framework 2018	Framework 2019
Funds and reserves brought forward	**12.75**	**11.50**	**10.86**	**7.48**
Income				
Membership & other unrestricted contribns	3.93	3.90	3.95	3.95
Programme contributions	13.60	13.68	13.66	13.36
Other Income	7.48	7.45	7.40	34.09
Total Income	**25.01**	**25.03**	**25.01**	**51.40**
Expenditure				
Central committee	0.87	-	0.50	-
World Mission Conference	-	-	1.54	-
Programme & other costs	11.14	11.71	11.46	11.68
Depreciation	1.66	1.70	2.66	2.62
Staff costs	12.65	12.23	12.23	12.23
Total Expenditure	**26.32**	**25.64**	**28.39**	**26.53**
Transfers in/(out)	0.06	(0.03)	-	-
Net result after transfers	**(1.25)**	**(0.64)**	**(3.38)**	**24.87**
Inc/(decr) Restricted Funds	(0.57)	(0.22)	(1.43)	0.25
Inc/(decr) Unrestricted & Designated Funds	(0.68)	(0.42)	(1.95)	24.62
Funds & Reserves carried forward	**11.50**	**10.86**	**7.48**	**32.35**
Staffing full time equivalents	107.8	103.7		

Mr Johnson presented the financial strategy.

WCC financial strategy

Definition

- Accompanies the strategic plan; sets out how WCC aims to remain a sustainable organisation now and in the longer-term.
- Identifies objectives, and indicators to be reached within the four-year period
- Affirms WCC's values of stewardship and economy of life

Conditions for sustainability

- Member churches committed to planning and participating in project work
- Effective and innovative communication
- Competent staff attracted, managed and retained
- Adequate administrative and financial infrastructure

WCC financial strategy 2018-2021: progress

- Various programme financial scenarios reviewed by finance committee in June 2016
- In November 2016, finance sub-committee:
    - supported a stable scenario, while recommending that a plan be developed to address an alternative scenario
    - noted that a transition period was concerned, in which impact of the building project would require to be taken into account
    - noted that the strategy should also take into account the assembly fund
- Following executive committee's recommendation in November 2016, a first draft financial strategy for 2018-2021, with outcome indicators, is presented (Doc 08)
- First draft sets out about 40 proposed indicators to be monitored by executive committee during 2018-2021 related to programme contributions, the building project, assembly, IT and facility management and human resources' initiatives

Programme funds: stable scenario 2018-2021

CHF 000	Forecast 2017	Framework 2018	Plan 2019	Plan 2020	Plan 2021
Opening programme fund balance	3,293	3,210	1,248	1,498	1,248
Restricted programme contributions	13,126	13,358	13,358	13,358	13,358
Contributions: World Mission Conference	499	299	-	-	-
Unrestricted income distribution to programmes	3,792	3,950	3,950	3,950	3,950
Other income	531	600	600	600	600
Total programme income	**17,948**	**18,207**	**17,908**	**17,908**	**17,908**
Programme implementation costs : fixed	654	644	644	644	644
Expenditure: restricted - matched to income					
Programme grants matched to income	461	406	406	406	406
Ecumenical initiatives	2,016	2,090	2,090	2,090	2,090
EDAN Kenya	182	182	182	182	182
Special projects	540	505	370	370	370
Mission and evangelism	242	242	242	242	242
Programme implementation costs: variable	**2,518**	**2,367**	**2,331**	**2,081**	**2,331**
Student costs Bossey	579	579	531	531	531
Programme staff costs : Geneva	7,684	7,710	7,710	7,710	7,710
Programme staff costs : field staff	872	872	872	872	872
Net infra. charge to programmes	2,489	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500
Programme expenditure (excl. special events)	18,237	18,097	17,878	17,628	17,878
CWME conference		1,542			
Central committee		500		500	
Total programme expenditure	**18,237**	**20,139**	**17,878**	**18,128**	**17,878**
Transfers	(44)	(30)	(30)	(30)	(30)
Increase/(decrease) programme fund balance	(333)	(1,962)	-	(250)	-
Transfers in from funds & reserves	250		250		250
Closing programme fund balance	3,210	1,248	1,498	1,248	1,498

Average programme income level is 9% lower than the target level of CHF 19.8 million set for 2014-2017; and almost CHF 1 million less than the average achieved 2014-2017. What impact for the *Strategic Plan 2018-2021?*

- High percentage of expenditure categories are fixed, or are strictly matched with income.
- The variable implementation cost line is impacted when general programme funding is reduced.
- In the alternative scenario, the variable implementation costs decrease to CHF 1.6 million.

11th Assembly Fund and first profile expenditure

- Assumption is that assembly contributions reach approximately the same level as in 2013; however Swiss franc is currently about 10% stronger than in 2012-2013
- For the 10th Assembly, CHF 2.8 million or 48% of available funds were applied for travel and accommodation; half for delegates, and half for staff, consultants, and other professionals.
- 653 delegates attended the 10th Assembly; for 72% or 470, travel and/or board and lodging were covered.
- 10th Assembly costs did not include the cost of venue or local transport, provided by the host churches

	10th Assembly	11th Assembly				
CHF 000	2010-2013	2018	2019	2020	2021	2018-2021
Opening balance	**1,647**	**1,200**	**1,425**	**1,615**	**2,365**	**1,200**
Assembly contributions	3,355	55	100	1,000	2,000	3,155
Undesignated income	200	-				-
Other income	454	-			300	300
Total income	**4,009**	**55**	**100**	**1,000**	**2,300**	**3,455**
Direct costs	(4,809)	(80)	(160)	(500)	(4,700)	(5,440)
Staff costs	(615)					-
Infrastructure	(305)					-
Total expenditure	**(5,729)**	**(80)**	**(160)**	**(500)**	**(4,700)**	**(5,440)**
Operating transfers in/(out)	90				50	50
Transfer from general reserves	200	250	250	250	250	1,000
Closing balance	**217**	**1,425**	**1,615**	**2,365**	**265**	**265**

Financial strategy 2018-2021: impact of Green Village

- Demolition of former library and two wings, and construction of WCC own building(s) over two-three years means loss of rental income: first estimate is CHF 1.5 million over three years
- Policy required for restriction or application of incoming proceeds from sale of land, or from land lease
    - Treasury management related to loans and management of sales proceeds
    - Depreciation of buildings to be demolished over remaining useful years
- Designated fund for the building project: CHF 1.7 million at 31 December 2016: assumptions concerning interest payable, professional fees and staff costs for 2020-2023

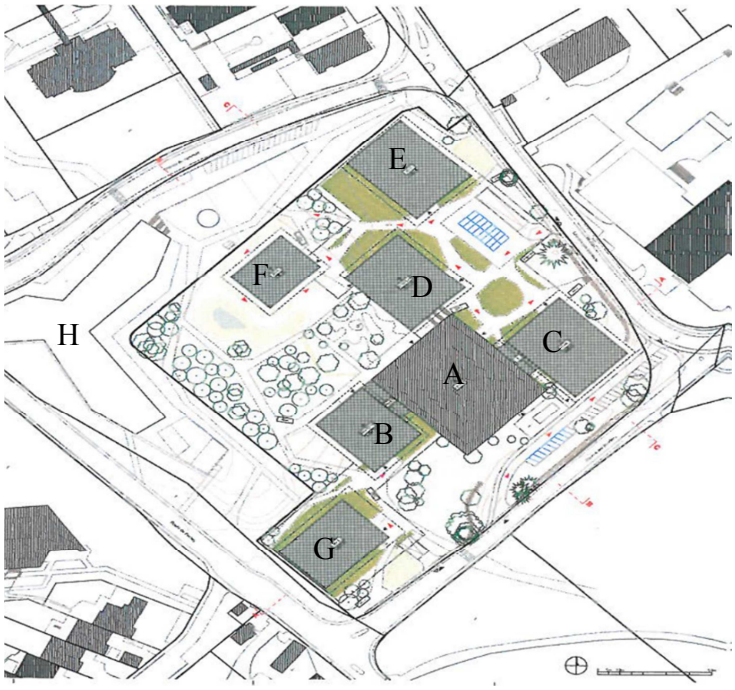
Ms Dykes concluded by noting that in the past, executive committee members have noted that programme sub-committee members required further information on finances than may have been available, and

opportunity to raise more detailed questions. A joint session between the programme and the finance sub-committees had been planned at the meeting, in order to meet this need.

6.1.4 Report of the Steering Committee for the Real Estate Development Project, March 2017

Ms Dykes presented the work on the Green Village project. She shared that the information was presented in the context of the council's overall financial strategy.

Green Village



		m2
A	Office and chapel	4,245
B	Ecumenical Centre offices and rental	7,935
C	Offices	12,640
D	Offices and commercial area	9,040
E	Offices	13,990
F	Apartments	6,010
G	Hotel / hotel-residence	7,840
		61,700
	Car park spaces	585
H	Global Fund headquarters	25,500

Recommendations from steering committee, March 2017

- An independent consultant be contracted to accompany further study related to the hotel development;
- Implenia be invited to proceed with the proposed strategy of seeking an early sales transaction for building E, together with its land;
- Work proceed with a master plan setting out architectural guidelines to apply for the whole Green Village site;
- Negotiations proceed as planned with the residents' association, *Radar*, with reference to the car park space numbers; and
- At its next meeting in June 2017, the recommendation to executive committee concerning the first steps in the sales strategy be developed by the steering committee.

She noted that we also needed to look back to remind ourselves what was already decided.

- The executive committee approved by consensus: "to authorise the general secretary, subject to the consent of the steering committee to contract a loan of CHF 35 million, mortgaged by the land and buildings of the Ecumenical Centre, for a period of up to four years, to be repaid by the sale of land at the end of the loan contract, in order to realise the [stated] objectives."
- Steering committee members: Rev. Dr Walter Altmann, Dean Anders Gadegaard, Archbishop Vicken Aykazian, Bishop Ivan M Abrahams, Bishop Sally Dyck, Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit.
- Advisors: (appointed subsequently): Mr François Bolsterli, legal counsel; Mr Martin Blöcher, finance; Mr Kurt Mosvold, real estate.
- "The steering committee's objectives will be to report to the executive committee on the process and to ensure that the interests of the Council are safeguarded."
- Reports have been made to Executive Committee at each meeting since that date.

She noted that in 2011, two strategies had been under consideration. The first had been to work with a real estate consultant, who would seek an investor ready to provide financing to the WCC for the pension fund, in exchange for the acquisition of land. The second had been to obtain a loan from a bank independently, and then work with a developer to increase the value of the site through obtaining permits, closing out the loan finally through a sales transaction with an investor. The WCC had gained a certain independence by having been able to adopt the second strategy.

Development contract process

20.3.12	Draft development contract v1 received
21.3.12	Advisors' meeting on draft contract
23.3.12	Commentary on the draft development contract, François Bolsterli, legal counsel
27.3.12	Meeting with Implenia for first review of financial profile
28.3.12	Meeting of steering committee: "agreed to extend signature date to 31 May to ensure advisors can negotiate and adjust financial and legal terms"
2.5.12	Advisors' meeting on draft contract; negotiation meeting with Implenia
3.5.12	Draft development contract v2 received
8.5.12	Report from real estate consultant, J Hamel, on financial terms in contract
11.5.12	Advisors' meeting to review report of J Hamel; negotiation meeting with Implenia
14.5.12	Draft development contract v3 received
14.5.12	Meeting of the steering committee: "advised that (i) one remaining effort be made to adjust the profit-share ratio in WCC's favour; and (ii) the contract proceed to signature being considered satisfactory for WCC, with or without the addition of the requested additional adjustment above."
24.5.12	Final version of development contract
30.5.12	Development contract signed

Professional advisors to the steering committee

Mr François Bolsterli	legal counsel, 2012-2014
Mr J Hamel	financial advisor, 2012
Mr Marc Aubry	financial advisor, 2013
Mr Philippe Favarger	real estate advisor, 2013 and 2016
PlanConsult, Basle	real estate and financial advisor, 2016
PricewaterhouseCoopers, Geneva	tax advice, 2016
Ms Claire Bolsterli	legal counsel, 2014 to present
PricewaterhouseCoopers, Zurich	hotel financial consultancy, 2017

At this point, Ms Dykes introduced Ms Claire Bolsterli, who is legal counsel to the project and the moderator welcomed her to this part of the meeting.

Matters for discussion

- What strategy does our development partner think would be best for WCC, in order that WCC meet its objectives?
- Is there likely to be a market for land lease?
- How does the development partner assess the level of discount which would be reasonable for a "goodwill" transaction for building E, compared to the contract terms?
- Who are the investors expressing an interest informally at this stage?
- How will we proceed with negotiations with *Radar*, the residents' association?
- What can be done in parallel, also by WCC, to advance the project while the ADP adoption is awaited?

Other matters – agenda of finance sub-committee

- Report on recommendations from prior meetings
- Report on fund for priority areas
- Compliance with policy on offices outside Switzerland
- Investments
- Capital expenditure
- General reserves
- Pension fund report – held over until next meeting in 2017
- The monitoring of the usual financial indicators, performance against the strategic plan for the last period.

Bishop Dr Swenson thanked the presenters for this very comprehensive report. Questions and comments were invited.

Dr Quawas raised four questions and concerns. Firstly, the presentation had referred to a decision of the executive committee in 2011 to sell land, with reference to "stated objectives". He expressed astonishment that such a decision had been taken and requested information on such objectives. He confirmed that he was aware of the project objectives as stated in the development contract of 2012, and confirmed that he supported those objectives.

Secondly, should these objectives be the same, the first being the repayment of the loan, then in his view there were alternative solutions to addressing the matter than the selling of land, and such other solutions should be studied carefully. Fund-raising could be conducted with the 345 member churches to repay the loan, or cover interest for an extended period for the loan.

In that context, and thirdly, he wished to confirm that the WCC can step out of the development project, and at phase 0, compensation of 180,000 Swiss francs would then be due to Implenia.

Finally, while it was undoubtedly the case that executive committee decided to sell land in 2011, that decision could not be valid if there were donations of land, or contributions related to land and buildings, given with conditions.

Ms Dykes confirmed that the objectives stated in the executive committee report in September 2011 were the same as WCC's objectives as stated in the development contract of 2012. The three objectives were, firstly, that the loan of CHF 24 million be repaid; secondly, that the Ecumenical Centre and WCC office

space be renovated or constructed to meet future needs; and thirdly, that the WCC own sufficient property to generate at least three million Swiss francs in annual rental income. She added that the development contract did not stipulate that land be sold. However, the first objective being to repay the substantial loan, the most effective way to meet that objective would be to sell a portion of the land. No other solution had been found to meet that objective.

Concerning breaking the development contract, Ms Dykes confirmed that the council was now approaching phase 2 of the project, as opposed to phase 0, and the value due to Implenia at this stage would be 11 million Swiss francs, should WCC decide to terminate the contract. She observed that Implenia had been working for 4-5 years on this project without any remuneration. She had consulted archives about the founding of the Ecumenical Centre, and noted that there was documentation about churches from all over the world who contributed funds for the Ecumenical Centre. No indication was found of restrictions related to gifts, nor conditions or hindrances to any transaction which the WCC might decide. She commented that a celebration of the original contributions and contributors might be an interesting consideration.

The general secretary commented on two points. He confirmed that member churches had been consulted in 2011 and 2012 concerning the raising of funds to address the pension fund crisis. There was unwillingness on their part to give for this purpose, as long as the WCC held property in Geneva which could generate the necessary value. Secondly, he considered the question of the considerable amount of land held by the WCC in Geneva, and the actual requirement for its on-going needs, as well as the perspective that the land offered in terms of the Ecumenical Centre's future in Geneva. He considered that the number of square metres to be held by WCC at the end of the development project might be rather a pragmatic matter.

Dr Quawas noted that the question of the actual land value had not yet been discussed, and that its value over generations should be a consideration in a truly long-term perspective. His preference would be to fund-raise across Europe, not only with churches, but with other partners supporting WCC, rather than sell land which might have an even greater value in the future, for assuring continuity of the WCC's work.

Bishop Petra Bosse-Huber shared that she could not speak for Europe, but she could speak for her church, the EKD. She affirmed firstly that her church remained financially and ecumenically committed to the WCC and its work. Although the matter of the pension fund loan and the research for solutions was before her appointment to executive committee, she could confirm the information shared by the general secretary. Her church had considered carefully the question of contributing towards the solution for the pension fund issue, and had made a clear decision not to make such a contribution while the WCC held valuable land in Geneva which could be applied for this purpose.

Ms Pirri-Simonian offered thanks for the presentation and discussion. In this context, she wished to affirm the importance of place, and therefore of Geneva, with its particular history and tradition. She then asked about the self-generated income, which represented about 30% of total income. She requested confirmation as to whether all self-generated income was raised by Bossey, and if so, why there might also be a deficit in relation to Bossey's activities.

Ms Dykes explained that self-generated income included 2.5 million Swiss francs earned by the Bossey guest house. The income contributed very substantially to covering the operation costs of the Ecumenical Institute at the Château. A positive cash flow was generated by the guest house activities, and a small deficit reported was not a financial concern, considering that the result was stated after charging about 500,000 Swiss francs in depreciation, a non-cash item representing the value of the buildings used by the guest house over the year.

Ms Pirri-Simonian asked whether there was a divergence between the priorities of funding partners, compared with those of the member churches, and if so, how that was addressed. She noted that there had been reductions over time in the number of programme staff and administrative support staff, and asked what approaches were being taken to seek out new funding relationships.

Mr Chial offered thanks for the questions. Care had been taken when working with other organisations to protect the priorities set by the WCC assembly and the central committee, and which were then monitored by the executive committee. In certain cases, areas of priority converged, when, for example, churches in different countries offered to host the Faith and Order Commission. In certain cases, when funding was provided, there were questions concerning further participation in the life of the WCC, or concerning increased participation for the partner concerned in specific meetings. One example of the alignment of objectives was the case of the WCC's work together with DanChurchAid. The latter had been able to focus its funding on South Sudan, which was identified as a priority country by both WCC and DanChurchAid.

Mr Chial concluded by giving the view that there was considerable staff dedication to the work. Dr Tveit noted that the meeting would address the matter of staffing later in the agenda.

6.1.5. AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT

Metropolitan Gennadios moderated a hearing session and invited Dr Quawas to share the report of the audit committee.

This report covers the work of the audit committee since its last report to executive committee in November 2016. The committee met on 24 April 2017.

1. Changes in membership

Ms Anke Grosse Frintrop, director Central Services, with responsibility for finance, with the Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches, joined the committee as a professional member. Her appointment had been proposed by the general secretary and approved by the leadership of the finance sub-committee, as delegated by the executive committee at its meeting in China, 17-23 November 2016.

Mr Alan Bittiner, former moderator of the committee, resigned in 2017. The general secretary has warmly thanked him for his professional contribution and commitment to the work of the committee over many years. Mr Myles Stott, professional member, was appointed moderator of the audit committee for the period up to its next meeting.

2. Financial statements 2016

WCC's auditor, PricewaterhouseCoopers, attended the meeting and presented the detailed report on the audit for the year ended 31 December 2016.

The auditor reported that the audit opinion would be issued without any qualification or comments; recommended that the financial statements submitted to the Executive Committee and to the member churches be approved; and reported that no significant misstatements and no cases of suspected or actual fraud had been identified during the audit.

In order to comply with changes in Swiss law, the auditor required that the financial statements be signed by both the general secretary and the moderator of the central committee before issue. The committee took note, and concurred that the procedure be implemented as required by the auditors.

The audit committee agreed that the leadership of the finance sub-committee should be informed that there were no material issues to be raised before their approval of the financial statements.

3. Internal control system

The auditor confirmed the existence of the internal control system on the basis of the audit procedures.
The auditor made one observation, rated as low risk, that WCC's IT systems' password policy was relatively weak and recommended that password parameters be aligned with best practices. The auditor's recommendation has been agreed by management for implementation in 2017.

4. Appointment of the auditor 2017

In accordance with para. 3.7 of its terms of reference, the audit committee **recommends** that executive committee appoint PricewaterhouseCoopers as auditor for 2017.

PricewaterhouseCoopers were selected as auditors for the five years 2014-2018, subject to annual appointment, following an audit tender in 2014.

5. Changes in accounting policies

Depreciation policy
It was reported to the committee that the approach to application of the depreciation policy would require consideration in the context of the planned demolition of the library and the centre's wings. This matter will be considered at the next meeting of the audit committee.

Charge for infrastructure services
It was reported that, for 2018, a new method for the calculation of infrastructure charges to programmes would be proposed. Although the method for charging infrastructure services is not an accounting policy, a change will have an impact on the notes and the presentation of the financial statements as well as on financial planning. A report of the impact on financial reporting for 2018 will be prepared for the next meeting of the audit committee.

Untaken vacation provision
The committee encourages the WCC to continue its efforts to reduce untaken vacation to the limit of five days as stated in the staff regulations. The untaken vacation provision stood at CHF 372,000 at 31.12.16. Reducing the number of untaken vacation days to five per employee would result in an estimated reduction of CHF 80,000.

6. Audit committee observations

(i) The WCC financial report includes a note that *The net book value of land, buildings and equipment includes CHF 3,106,000 recorded as donated land and buildings.* This is an historical note and details supporting the different elements of possible donations may be held in archives. The audit committee requested that archives be studied to identify any relevant details, in particular in relation to land, given the likelihood of land sales in the next years.

(ii) The committee noted that the *Fund for priority areas* had been opened in 2015 with a balance of CHF 340,000 and held a balance of CHF 234,000 at 31.12.16. The committee questioned whether the fund had proved to be necessary. It was observed that CHF 106,000 had been applied from the fund in 2016, being CHF 62,000 less than the allocated value of CHF 168,000 reported to executive committee at its meeting in Norway, 20-21 June 2016.

(iii) The committee heard that two of the EHAIA offices, in Togo and the DRC, had been brought into compliance with local labour laws, that a proposal for Kenya is in progress and that two offices remained outstanding, Angola and Zimbabwe.

7. Other matters

It was agreed that staff should organise an introduction to the WCC and its finances for Ms Anke Grosse Frintrop before the next meeting of the audit committee.

6.1.6. PRESENTATION BY IMPLENIA ON THE GREEN VILLAGE

Bishop Swenson welcomed the group of guests who had joined the committee and then invited Ms Dykes to introduce the group that will be presenting about the Green Village. Ms Dykes introduced the following guests:

WCC legal counsel – Maître Claire Bolsterli

Implenia Suisse SA – Mr Sylvain Chiovetta, Ms Camille Sainte-Rose and Ms Alodie Schneuwly

LRS Architectes Sàrl – Mr Raul Aguiar, Mr William Jaulain, Mr Alain Robbe and Mr Rolf Seiler

The guests then offered a presentation about the Green Village.

Mr Sylvain Chiovetta thanked the WCC, and in particular, its executive committee, for the opportunity and privilege for Implenia to work with the WCC in developing the Green Village project. He believed that the project would empower the organization further to fulfil its broader objectives, and for this reason, Implenia was proud and glad to participate in the development.

Ms Camille Sainte-Rose reported on the progress of the building development project, presenting the material with the following structure:

I. Progress update
- Building project phases
- Area Development Plan
- Heritage department
- Landscaping competition
- Allocation of the architects' mandates

II. Architecture convention & Master plan (by LRS)

III. Issues at stake
- Objectives of WCC
- Market observation
- Stage of construction
- Future landholding

- Various development models
- Opportunity of earlier sale

VI. Questions / discussion

I. Update on Progress

The building project phases (regarding the development contract) are as follows:

- Phase 0: Setting up of the project: completed
  - Appraisal of the existing buildings
  - Technical features of the buildings
- Phase 1: Architecture competition: completed
  - «Green Village» project - *LRS Architectes* SA
- Phase 2: Area Development Plan (ADP) and Impact study: nearly completed
- Phase 3: Building permit (per building - see provisional calendar): overview sketch
- Phase 4: Definition of financial objectives: in process
- Phase 5: Commercialisation: in process
  - Buildings E,F,G
- Phase 6: Project implementation: 2019

She also shared a progress update about the Area Development Plan (ADP), as follows:

- Technical study: **completed**
- & Concertation process: **completed**
- Public inquiry: **completed**
- Municipality opinion: **completed**
- Opposition process: **in process**

She noted that the opposition process was launched on 19 May, 2017, and it will end on 19 June 2017. Opposition is expected from RADAR regarding both the number of parking spaces, and the number of car parks.

A progress report regarding the heritage department is as follows:

- The **Classification of building A:** in process upon request of the heritage department *(in parallel to the ADP).*
- In order to clarify the impact of the classification, a study has been launched at the request of the heritage department to review building A.
- Timeline: end of May 2017 - September 2017.
- With the purpose of:
  - Maximising transformation within the renovation to meet the needs of the WCC.
  - Maximising the use of the space in the building.
  - Avoiding a strict classification of the entire building and knowing the rules in advance.
  - Encouraging the WCC to start to consider its future needs even if the renovation of building A will be done later.
- The early review will also help estimate likely renovation costs.

An update on the landscaping competition was also noted. The objective of the competition was to result in the selection of a project and of a landscape architect.

This competition has been organised due to the fact that:

- The WCC estate is quite extensive,

- The thematic of the outdoors has been important in the «Green Village» project since the beginning.

With the advantage of:
- Involvement of the municipality and the state in decision-making, in order to ease the acceptance of the project later,
- A multi-reflexion and analysis, which is an added value for the project.

The building owner **objectives for the landscaping project are**:
- Welcoming and inspiring the visitor; enhancing the view of the chapel within the «Green Village»;
- Generating a calm and serene atmosphere, evoking an impression of justice and peace (to the extent possible, the natural beauty of the current landscaping should be retained and enhanced);
- Encouraging encounters between persons walking on the site through pathways and squares;
- Promoting simplicity, sustainability and biodiversity; and
- Taking into consideration the requirement to keep maintenance costs low for all future owners of the site.

II. Architectural Master Plan

Mr Rolf Seiler confirmed that *LRS Architectes* was pleased to work on the project. He presented the architectural master plan, which would assure the implementation of the overall unity and quality of the project, on which different architects will work over the years of the development.

The founding principles of the project were noted as:
- Fragmentation of the program in several volumes
- Pavilions placed in a park with generous surrounding vegetation
- Compactness of volumes in order to free maximum space for green areas
- Site variation but unity of forms
- Uniform and recognizable neighbourhood, like a village

He noted that the landscaping would be a unifying factor in the overall design of the estate, and that time spent in selecting a landscape concept would be well rewarded.

He provided further information about the Area Development Plan.

Within the Area Development Plan, the purpose and designation of each building was as follows:
- Building A: Renovated central building of architectural significance, in the middle of the village, with conference room and chapel
- Buildings B, C, D, and E: offices
- Building F: apartment building, with a crèche on the ground floor
- Building G: hotel

Volume was a consideration in determining how best to use the site; and there was attention to both proportions and the adequate space between the buildings.

Another aspect for consideration in landscaping is the fact that the plot is within the international zone, within the *Jardin des Nations*, or garden of the nations. Two significant Geneva pathways, named the *Promenade de la Paix* and the *Cours des Nobel*, will cross the estate, and in addition, other paths will be designed for access to the site, and to encourage walking in the district.

There would also be a north-east square, south-east square, and the *Brugger* garden.

Mr Rolf Seiler then spoke about the building entrances. The architects believed that it would be interesting to pursue the idea of entrances at certain angles of each building, fostering visual contact between buildings. The campus should not be simply a group of buildings, but rather a campus where people would see each other and may know each other.

Another important element was the car park design. The concept would be to have few cars parked outside, while designing car parks which would be both cost-effective, but which would also limit the resultant excavated and paved areas, which cannot then be planted with trees. The wish is to offer space where terraces or outside areas could be developed, close to the buildings.

He stated that the architectural master plan includes the following four elements at this stage:

i) Atmosphere
ii) Unity
iii) Volume compactness
iv) Relationship with building A

He then spoke about each of the four elements in detail.

III. Issues at stake

Ms Camille Sainte-Rose shared, as a reminder, the issues at stake.

The objectives of the WCC, defined in 2012, are to be met through the realization of this project, are the following:

- Reimburse the loan of CHF 24 million
- Develop for its own use:
    - Sufficient workspaces for 200 employees
    - A renovated chapel, and a conference facility
- Generate annual revenue of at least CHF 3 million (as rental or leasehold revenue).

Implenia still believed the objectives were attainable, working together with the WCC on the project.

Currently, WCC's total requirement for office space was estimated at 5,664 square metres, of which 2,840 square metres would be included in the central building which was to be renovated (building A) and 2,824 would be office space in one of the new buildings.

She spoke about the challenges in the real estate market in Geneva for offices, while confirming that Implenia remained confident for the Green Village project.

Concerning the real estate market for apartments, one challenge would be the level of price control, and social housing regulations. She reported that Implenia was working with the WCC and the Geneva housing office to find solutions which would improve the market potential for the apartment building.

Some commentary was then offered on the hotel market in Geneva, which was considered relatively dense, with more than 125 hotels present, mostly in the three and four star categories. The type of hotel selected would have an impact on its profitability and value. Implenia and the WCC had launched feasibility studies to help develop recommendations for the most suitable hotel for the Green Village estate.

Some analysis was offered concerning the neighbourhood, which formed part of the international zone, and was generally considered a good site for the project. Projects offering some possible competition to be taken into consideration included the Global Fund building, and a significant neighbouring project to the south of the plot, where the headquarters of the *Médecins sans Frontières* would be built. There would be some valuable infrastructure development for the project, such as the Route des Nations, which would ease access, and the extension of the tramway that would link the UN square to Geneva airport.

In addition, other renovations were planned, such as that of the International Labour Organization. These were in general good signs for the whole district.

As a developer, Implenia maintained contacts within the broader real estate industry, and was already informally discussing the site with different investors. Implenia' s commercialisation department was considering strategies.

There would be several stages of construction, with several building permits to be obtained. They were:

- Stage 1: 2019-2021
- Stage 2: 2020-2022
- Stage 3: 2022-2024
- Stage 4: (dates not yet named)

It was noted that building A could be renovated earlier. Technical and cash flow questions were to be studied.

The land plot in Grand-Saconnex would have to be restructured, to anticipate options for future landholding. There would be co-ownership of certain common areas. Various development models for future buildings and land related to each building would be studied.

The decision concerning the related land for sale or co-ownership in relation to building E was one topic. A further decision of importance was that related to the buildings which WCC would own, and in particular whether building C or building B was concerned. To become owner of building C might entail the sale of more of the land; whereas keeping building B might represent less total investment and provide more flexibility. Implenia would continue developing studies to help the WCC answer the question concerning which buildings to develop for its own ownership.

An option in relation to ownership of the hotel was considered with the Steering Committee in March 2017. There were indications that the hotel might generate a high income; however, that aspect also needed to be further analysed. For the hotel, one significant question was the level of rent that the operator might be prepared to pay, and this might also be assessed through a competition process for selection of the operator. The risk profile for an investor in a hotel was not the same as that of an investor in office space; this aspect was also to be considered.

Each of the different development models presented its own advantages and disadvantages. The question remained a matter of judgement for the WCC, in assessing which advantages and disadvantages it would accept, or not.

IV. Questions

Bishop Swenson thanked the speakers from Implenia and *LRS Architectes* for the thorough presentation. Questions and comments were invited from the executive committee members.

Ms Pirri-Simonian asked what energy strategy would be adopted, particularly in the light of the Green Village concept; and she also asked what approach would be adopted for car parking, and whether car parking would be costly for WCC's tenants in the future. She reported that some tenants were currently being challenged already by the introduction of payment for access to the Ecumenical Centre car park in July 2017. In her view, the NGO hub at the Ecumenical Centre, consisting of a number of small tenants, was also a group to be taken into account when considering the definition of future services, and their costs.

Ms Camille Sainte-Rose responded concerning the energy strategy. She explained that there were regulations in Geneva concerning energy, and that the objective was to seek a higher standard than those set down in regulations. Certifications were offered in relation to energy; one objective would be to meet a superior certification level. Decisions would be taken in this respect also with the WCC, since there would also be cost considerations.

With regard to the car park question, and the policy for the price of future services, Mr Sylvain Chiovetta commented that in the project work with WCC, regular meetings were held and decisions were taken jointly. The question of the extent of parking and the cost of services would be taken into account when the model for car parking was finalised together with WCC.

Dr Quawas raised three questions. Firstly, he was concerned to know whether the local infrastructure for water and electricity had been assessed in relation to the dimension of the Green Village project. Secondly, following the outline presentation on commercialisation, he wished to have an understanding of whether the prices likely to be offered seemed reasonable to Implenia. Finally, he noted that the contract referred also to the option of land lease rather than sale. He requested that the option be assessed carefully, since there was sensitivity to the question of selling land, which, in his opinion, may have been donated to the WCC.

Mr Sylvain Chiovetta, Mr Alain Robbe and Ms Camille Sainte-Rose each gave comments of reassurance with regard to the first question, confirming that the questions of infrastructure had been assessed, and continued to be considered. Options would be available to ensure solutions for energy and other services for the site.

Concerning commercialisation, Ms Camille Sainte-Rose outlined the strategy for office space, and the need to identify tenants. However, at this stage, it was not possible to determine the sales price closely. When the permits were obtained, then a more serious level of discussion could be engaged with potential tenants. With potential tenants identified, an assessment of the likely sales price for an office building could be made. Similarly, for the apartments, an investor competition would be opened when the permits had been obtained. In relation to the hotel, the possible sales price could be assessed when an operator was identified, and the likely rent assessed.

Mr Sylvain Chiovetta commented that the decision about what buildings should be owned by WCC was also a question related to the assessment of the market. For example, identifying that there was a high demand for a particular building might be an important element in deciding that the building should be brought to market for sale.

As to their current assessment of the real estate market, Mr Chiovetta gave the view that the demand for residential buildings was very high, and was likely to remain high in the next two to three years. In their financial models, they anticipated that this building would be sold.

The demand for offices was, however, not as high. Other events outside the real estate market, such as votes on corporate taxes, would impact what corporations may decide on strategies for moving,

expanding, or otherwise. Such a vote would be implemented in 2019, and Implenia was very attentive to that. At the moment, the market for office space was weak, however, that was also potentially subject to change, and the situation was being closely monitored.

There was very strong interest from operators concerning the development of a hotel, especially for a hotel in the UN district. The 2-3 star was where there was the greatest potential.

One alternative also studied was the opportunity to sell the land only, as soon as the master plan would be approved. Such an approach would be different from that defined in the development agreement, which envisaged a project with WCC participation in the sale of a building, and not just the sale of the land. However, an opportunity to sell earlier may emerge because interest rates were low, and investors were seeking opportunities to obtain additional points of yield by acquiring projects earlier. It could be that the WCC objectives could be met with regard to a building transaction without actually waiting until the end of the project phases for the building. With the architectural master plan in place, the development would still be conducted according to the overall vision, even with a third-party investor finalising the building permit.

It was Mr Chiovetta's opinion that such a sale could occur as soon as the master plan was approved, which could be as early as next year. Implenia would continue to test the market.

Dr Quawas queried whether financial models had been developed which addressed the objective without selling land. He gave the personal opinion that he would prefer that land not be sold, while emphasising that this remained his personal view, and not the opinion of the WCC.

Mr Sylvain Chiovetta referred Dr Quawas to an option in which E was sold. One of the objectives was to reimburse the loan, and it was the opinion of Implenia that the sale of E would reimburse the loan. But in that model, other buildings could then be sold, and the land retained. Mr Chiovetta said that in his opinion, it might be an option of preference, since after the sale of E, land would remain in the ownership of the WCC. There would be less in capital receipts and more rental income over the long-term. The option presented certain advantages, although WCC might then own fewer buildings on the estate.

6.2. ACTION ON THE REPORT OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY ON THE MEETING OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE FOR THE REAL ESTATE PROJECT

Dr Abuom moderated a decision session.

She invited the general secretary to present the report.

Dr Abuom noted that the decisions for this session are being made with the use of proxies.

- Dr Audeh Quawas for Prof. Dr Marina Kolovopoulou
- Ms Teny Pirri-Simonian for Rev. Taaroanui Maraea

With this clarification and notation, the executive committee proceeded to discuss the report.

Discussion

Dr Quawas asked that the title of the report be changed. The title was "Report of the Steering Committee for the Real Estate Development Project". Dr Quawas noted, however, that it should instead be the "Report of the General Secretary Regarding the Real Estate Project". The title should be changed to

reflect the fact that the general secretary receives the report of the steering committee, and may then present it to the executive committee. With the agreement of the committee the new title was now “Report of the General Secretary Regarding the Real Estate Project”.

Metropolitan Nifon noted that the steering committee consisted of eight members, and that four members had been absent from the meeting. He stated that the general secretary was a member of the steering committee. There were therefore only four members present, including the general secretary. In his view, to make decisions, there required to be more than four members present if the steering committee wished to take decisions. Dr Tveit confirmed that there was awareness on this concern, but that he believed that without any specific rule to the contrary, a quorum was defined as half. In his opinion, the work could and should be brought forward to executive committee, since it referred also to discussions and decisions taken at the previous meeting in March 2017.

Metropolitan Nifon reflected that the executive committee based its orientation on the decisions of the steering committee, and therefore the members of the steering committee should be present if the work was to proceed with the diligence required. The general secretary agreed that it was the wish and intention that the steering committee members take the responsibility seriously. He affirmed that the report was brought forward as a report of the general secretary, and requested that the recommendations be considered for decision by executive committee. Dr Quawas considered that the matter of quorum required to be addressed further, as a possible point of non-compliance with the WCC Rules. Although the report was certainly a report of the general secretary, its content depended on the steering committee, which met, in his view, without a quorum. Concerning the reference of the general secretary to a prior report of the steering committee in March 2017, Dr Quawas asked whether the same recommendation had been presented at that time, concerning a decision to sell the land and the project related to building E. Both Dr Tveit and Bishop Swenson confirmed that the discussion had focused on this strategy as a preferential option. The meeting had clearly been leaning in that direction based on their discussion.

Following some further discussion on the issue of quorum, Dr Gardner while he could understand the concern with respect to quorum, he thought the meeting might consider the discussion in March, together with that of the meeting this week, with regard to the particular subject. He asked that the executive committee consider the proposals now made as an affirmation of the meeting that was held in March of this year.

Dr Abuom commented that she wished also to refer to previous decisions. She noted that the previous executive committee, at its meeting 13-16 September 2011, had issued a mandate to the general secretary. That executive committee had approved by consensus: “to authorise the general secretary, subject to the consent of the steering committee to contract a loan of CHF 35 million, mortgaged by the land and buildings of the Ecumenical Centre, for a period of up to four years, to be repaid by the sale of land at the end of the loan contract, in order to realise the [stated] objectives”. The mandate referred to selling land to repay the mortgage. While she conceded that Dr Quawas might be right to state that the March meeting did not specifically formulate a recommendation to sell land related to building E, the discussion should be placed in the proper perspective.

Dr Quawas presented a number of arguments against any decision to sell in principle. He stated that an outcome or objective had been defined, with regard to proceeds for the sale, however, that in itself did not constitute a sales strategy. Secondly, the hotel consultant who had addressed the steering committee had advised that decisions could be taken over time; that observation had not been reflected in the steering committee’s report. Thirdly, he believed that it was primarily in Implenia’s interests to move forward towards a sale, while executive committee should exercise caution with regard to property owned by the fellowship.

Dr Tveit responded by reminding the meeting that in 2011, WCC had been in a financial crisis, which had been addressed in the first instance by a decision of the governing bodies to undertake a development project and by taking a loan against the property. If these steps had not been taken at that time, the general secretary believed that the continuing financial crisis may have resulted in serious adverse consequences for WCC in 2012 or 2013. In his view, if there was unwillingness to move forward with decisions, following the path determined by the former executive committee, then the WCC might be returned to a state of financial crisis. The general secretary requested the executive committee to deal with the matter with due respect for formalities, but also in the interests of the financial security of the WCC, and to follow up on the work of both the administration and the steering committee.

Dr Tveit stated that, in his view, decisions should not be taken which would place at risk the work which had already been conducted in the light of the mandate granted in 2011. He said that he had to question whether in fact he had the confidence of the governing bodies, if actions were taken to stop the work at this time. In his opinion, it had been a matter of consistent discussion as to the optimal combination of sales and construction by the WCC, to identify which would bring the best outcome in favour of the organisation, and not a question as to whether a sale would be contracted. In his view, there should not be an issue concerning the sale as a matter of principle.

The general secretary confirmed that in his view, the steering committee meeting had been a proper meeting, with four participating out of the eight, and with a recommendation based on work conducted in March. The observations of the hotel consultant were concerned only with that aspect of the project, where it was agreed that more time was required to assess the situation. It was now the responsibility of executive committee to take a decision regarding the land and building E, based on those recommendations. In his view, if the executive committee did not move forward, Implenia might form the opinion that executive committee was unable to take decisions in this process.

Dr Abuom then invited the members of the steering committee to speak, requesting that they help executive committee to understand what happened in March.

Bishop Swenson reported that she had been involved in this work from the beginning, including the meeting last June in Trondheim, then in November in China, and then in March in Geneva. The steering committee also met during the past few days. At these meetings, the members have monitored charts with proposals for buildings A, B, C, D, E, and F. They have been discussing the possibilities and moving toward clarity on the sale of building E. She noted that although only four members had been present at this meeting, she had been present when other members were present, and other members were aware of and supported the direction to be proposed.

Dr Gardner reflected that, as noted earlier, it had been clear from each of the steering committee's discussions in which he had participated that sale had not been an option; rather it was a condition. A sale was required to satisfy the obligation of the pension fund loan, and to provide the capital for the other buildings. It was also the case that in each meeting, the committee and advisors discussed the objectives of the development partners. He believed that during this meeting, the consultant's remarks concerning the need to conduct further work before decision concerned specifically the hotel project, which was potentially the most attractive building within the development in terms of marketability. He believed that the recommendations to the executive committee should not be seen as resulting from one particular meeting of the steering committee, but rather as recommendations derived from a series of meetings.

Archbishop Vicken confirmed the viewpoints of Dr Gardner, concerning the principle that a sale was required, and that the project had been consistently discussed with that parameter; and the limited context of the particular recommendation of the hotel consultant. He considered that executive committee should

take the necessary time now to reach a decision, conscious that if the general secretary were required to withdraw the report, then there may be financial consequences.

Dr Abuom reflected that what was being addressed was how to reimburse the loan contracted to finance the pension fund. At an earlier meeting, the general secretary had been asked to look into possibilities of approaching churches and others. She reminded the meeting that it was important to note that churches approached had refused because the council had the property to develop.

Dr Watkins commented that she had found the statements made by the steering committee members present at executive committee to be convincing, and considered that as executive committee, members had a fiduciary responsibility for the life of the council. She urged the meeting to continue consideration of the report, and to make decisions, given that over the course of several meetings, there had been a quorum of the steering committee considering the question of the recommendation for a sale. Dr Watkins was confident that this report had reached the executive committee in good order.

Dr Abuom noted that the executive committee was still in a clarification mode, with the purpose of developing a common understanding of what action should be taken.

Metropolitan Nifon reflected that the points discussed had helped to clarify matters. It was clear that the question of selling had been discussed many times, with the objective being to improve the financial situation. His question was therefore whether the decision could be delayed to a later meeting of executive committee, given doubt concerning compliance with Rules on the question of quorum, which could lead to a later challenge concerning due process.

Dr Abuom asked for clarification on what decisions were to be considered a necessity now, and which decisions could be delayed.

Bishop Azariah referred to the history of the pension fund loan, and the fact that Dr Quawas' concerns should be taken seriously, since sale of property must be approached with due care. However, he was concerned to find a way forward that maintained the integrity of the WCC.

Bishop Bosse-Huber commented that she concurred with the views expressed by Dr Watkins. In addition, she commented that she was regularly asked what progress was being made with the project, and from her perspective, the issue was to move forward with due care, but as soon as possible, because there was cost incurred in delay. In her view, there was no indication in the documents that recommendations were not carefully prepared for the decisions which needed to be made at this meeting.

Dr Tveit believed that a decision should be made at this meeting concerning the strategy of sale of building E with land. To delay the decision to November 2017 would delay the work of the development partner, with potentially adverse results for the project, including the risk that Implenia might lose confidence in its work with the council. If the concern was that of quorum, then additional assurances could rapidly be obtained from other steering committee members, since the mind of the steering committee as a whole was represented in the recommendation.

Dr Abuom clarified that the decision the executive committee was asked to make was to proceed with the project, with the perspective of the sale of land and building E on the plot, when the Area Development Plan would be approved.

Dr Quawas then presented the following arguments in favour of delaying the decision on the sale of land and building E. It was his understanding that the bank was not requesting that the loan of 24 million Swiss francs be repaid, and that the only financial risk was therefore an annual payment of loan interest of

about 350,000 Swiss francs. He therefore asserted that WCC finances were not at risk. He added that the Area Development Plan was not yet approved, although it was supposed to have been approved in March 2017. The strategy to sell E depended on the approval of the Area Development Plan, and it would seem appropriate to wait until the Area Development Plan was approved before deciding on the sale of E. Therefore, in his view, there would be no adverse consequences to WCC if the decision were postponed until November 2017, regardless of the question of quorum.

Dr Tveit remarked that his understanding of the WCC's situation with regard to the loan was that an extension had been granted, but that reimbursement would certainly be required, and time was therefore of the essence in ensuring transaction proceeds to cover the commitment. Secondly, the 350,000 Swiss francs in interest rate per year was not insignificant.

He confirmed that the Area Development Plan was close to adoption, with the final negotiation concerning the number of car park places. It was therefore important that the executive committee recognise a first step in its real estate development strategy, which offered different options, by taking a decision on what building and land might first proceed to market. In this way, executive committee would recognise its responsibility to take decisions, and Implenia would be authorised to move forward accordingly. If, on the other hand, there was a serious objection on the part of executive committee to selling land, then steps would be required to withdraw from the project, because all work to this point assumed that land would be sold.

Dr Abuom noted the observation from the general secretary, emphasising that executive committee was not taking a decision to sign a sales contract, but was asked to give the first direction in the sales strategy.

Dr Quawas re-read the recommendation that was approved by consensus at the June 2016 central committee meeting, and which was noted on page 55 of those meeting minutes, as follows:

> The central committee **delegates** to the leadership of central committee the authority to decide upon sales and long term leases of land or buildings, based on the recommendations of the WCC steering committee for the real estate development project and the decision of the executive committee. In accordance with Rule XVIII Legal provisions, point 4, joint signature is required to legally bind the organisation, those with such joint signing authority being listed formally at the Register of Commerce, Geneva, their authority having been granted in accordance with that same Rule.
>
> For sales and long term lease transactions related to land and buildings, the central committee **decides** that the joint signing authority be the general secretary, plus two additional signatures from the moderator and the vice moderators.

Dr Tveit explained that there was no question of signature of a sales contract before the end of 2017. The executive committee would be informed if there were any such contract for consideration. He wished rather to know if there was any objection to sale, reflecting a change in the mind of executive committee. If that were the case, then a change of approach would also be required in dealings with the development partner, Implenia.

Dr Quawas clarified that he understood that the executive committee supported the strategy to sell. However, in his view it remained early to decide on a sale, given that the Area Development Plan was not yet approved, and that contracts were yet to be prepared. In his opinion, a decision could be postponed until November 2017 without adversely affecting the project.

Dr Gardner suggested that executive committee decide to maintain its commitment to sell. At the November meeting, further concrete proposals with regard to building E could then be considered.

Dr Tveit shared that there were two ways to proceed, in his view. One approach would be to receive the report, and decide not to take action on the first recommendation. Instead, executive committee would indicate its intention to sell, and not its decision to stop the process. A second approach would be that executive committee request the steering committee, together with the general secretary, to continue working on the project, including preparation towards a sale of the land and building for E, and to bring a report on progress to the executive committee at the earliest possibility.

Dr Quawas agreed with the second approach, and requested that there be further information shared on the process which the steering committee would adopt concerning the determination of pricing for the sale.

Bishop Bosse-Huber said that the executive committee should be clear and determined on the principle that land be sold. It was not her wish that the discussion of this principle be repeated at the next meeting. In her view, there should be a decision reflecting that a sale of land was a necessary condition in order to proceed towards objectives.

Dr Abuom summarized the proposal that executive committee would affirm that there would be a sale of part of the WCC's land. She observed that there was consensus on this affirmation. Secondly, she observed that there was consensus on the principle that further information would be shared with executive committee, by the steering committee, on the sales process, leading to the actual sales transaction.

The general secretary then offered two proposals:

- That the executive committee affirm that selling the land related to building E is the first part of the building project strategy.
- The executive committee will be informed about further details about how the sale of building E proceeds.

With these clarifications, the executive committee proceeded to decision-making with regard to the report.

Mandate of the steering committee

The steering committee was appointed by executive committee at its meeting in February 2014 with the following mandate:

(a) report to the executive committee on the process through the general secretary;

(b) ensure that the interests of the council are safeguarded, and

(c) explore possibilities of investments and/or contributions from member churches and other partners.

Objectives of steering committee meeting of 10 June 2017

The steering committee met to address the following objectives:

- Review and consider the architectural charter for Green Village, as presented to executive committee by *LRS Architectes* on 7 June;
- Receive a report on further testing and consideration of Options 1 and 3, as described in Doc. No. 09 Report of the Steering Committee, from its meeting of 13 March 2017;

- Prepare the recommendation to executive committee concerning the first transaction; and
- Receive a report from the hotel consultant contracted to accompany further study related to the hotel development, in order that the potential of the hotel be assessed independently.

6.2.1. ARCHITECTURAL CHARTER

The steering committee received a document entitled *World Council of Churches: Architectural Charter*, dated 7 June 2017, described as "in progress", and as prepared by *LRS Architectes*. The charter "aims to set out the principles needed to ensure that the architectural projects for this new district are coherent and well managed." The introduction describes the charter as a working document that may change and be supplemented as studies progress.

The committee considered that the principles set out, including architectural unity, compactness of volumes and the design of connections to the main building, will ensure that Green Village concepts will be implemented in the future, even when different architects and investors are called to be involved in the project as it proceeds. The committee noted that sections are still to be developed or completed, concerning landscaping, signage, lighting, and impact of phasing; and that the energy and environment report is to be included as an appendix to the charter.

The steering committee **recommends** that executive committee:

(i) **approve** the general directives for architectural unity for the Green Village project; and

(ii) **require** that the steering committee share a report on progress with the architectural charter at the next meeting of executive committee in November 2017.

These recommendations were approved by consensus.

6.2.2. FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF OPTIONS 1 AND 3

At its meeting of 13 March 2017, and further to analysis of reports from both Implenia and from independent real estate consultants (November 2016), the steering committee had retained the following options for further study. The options were presented in the form of cash flow analyses from 2019-2027.

Option 1: Own buildings A and B (see appendix for building plan)
Sell land and project E; and sell projects C, D, F and G, while retaining the land. Proceeds from the sale of the five projects, together with land lease income from C, D, F and G would fund the construction of B for WCC's own use; and the renovation of A. In the model reviewed, the project would generate CHF 2.9 million annual income from 2025; and a loan of CHF 8 million would be held at 2027.

Option 3: Own buildings A, B and G
In order to raise funds towards covering the increased construction costs for building G, land would be sold for buildings F and C, in addition to E. There would be proceeds from sale of the four projects, C, D, E and F; and land lease income from D. Proceeds would be applied towards the construction of B, for WCC's own use, and for G, the hotel-residence, as well as the renovation of A. In the model reviewed, the project would generate CHF 4.7 million annual income from 2025; a loan of CHF 24 million would be held at 2027.

The following was reported from further study of these options:

- Implenia had shared a report on 7 June for review by the steering committee which building C, an office building, with a rating of "low" with regard to market demand and ease of sale. It was noted that both options rely on the timely realisation of project C, in order to fund construction.

- A preliminary discussion with WCC's bank indicated that financing could be obtained at the level of 30% for an office building, and 50% for a hotel.
- The cash flow models reviewed, particularly for option 3, relied not only on sales proceeds, but also on CHF 15 million of rental income generated from the project, to fund construction, and to reimburse loans. Increased owner's capital would be required to achieve the project, if income generated were to be applied for programme work.

The steering committee concluded that work should continue in analysing the possible strategies for realising Option 3. On approval of the Area Development Plan, an approach should be made to a foundation concerning a possible contribution towards the renovation of building A. Further, strategies for co-investment may be considered for building G, whether together with member churches, or with an operator.

The steering committee required that further study continue, and a report be brought at the next meeting.

6.2.3. FIRST TRANSACTION IN THE GREEN VILLAGE PROJECT

At its meeting in September 2011, the executive committee approved by consensus: "that WCC should proceed with the development plans…in order to meet the following objectives: (i) fund the transfer of the assets and obligations of the pension fund to an external service provider; (ii) develop a new Ecumenical Centre for the 21st century; and (iii) aim to derive from the development rental income beyond that which the Council is presently able to realise."

At the same meeting, the executive committee approved by consensus: "to authorise the general secretary, subject to the consent of the steering committee, to contract a loan (…), mortgaged by the land and buildings of the Ecumenical Centre (…), to be repaid by the sale of land at the end of the loan contract, in order to realise the above objectives."

Further to the work undertaken with Implenia under the development contract signed in May 2012, the Area Development Plan is expected to be adopted at the end of this year.

Although no formal commercialisation could begin until the Area Development Plan is approved, in March 2017 the steering committee agreed that Implenia could be in preliminary contact with investors concerning the project, and that the first discussions should be focused on building E.

Implenia has shared the view that there may be a possibility to market building E on a "goodwill" basis. Under such an arrangement, the development contract terms concerning the building development margin would be set aside, in favour of a negotiated price for the land and the project, to be received earlier, also releasing WCC from involvement in the development of the building permit and monitoring of the construction finances.

The steering committee identified building E, together with its land, as the most suitable for the first transaction for the following reasons:

- It is the largest building in the project, and is expected to realise, together with sale of land, sufficient proceeds to reimburse the loan and to contribute towards further objectives;
- It is expected that there will be high market demand for the residential building, and for the hotel, were it to be sold. A successful launch of the project with its largest office building may encourage further acquisition of office space, to be offered later on the site; and
- Building E is situated in the north-east corner of the plot, in the car park area, and can be developed with the least disruption to the existing buildings.

Before a sale would be undertaken, the WCC plot would require to be divided. Implenia had presented, for preliminary consideration, the proposal that land to be sold would be defined as the building's area on the ground. The investor would then also be party to a co-ownership agreement, for a proportionate share of the remainder plot.

The steering committee recognised that it will need to define further the process leading to the decision to sell, to be brought to the leadership of the central committee, following the review process below. The process leading to the sales decision will include the division of the plot and the definition of related agreements; the understanding of the investor profile; and the negotiation of offers and terms. A discussion on the transaction process will be continued at the next meeting.

At its meeting in Norway in June 2016, central committee delegated "to the leadership of central committee the authority to decide upon sales and long-term leases of land or buildings, based on the recommendations of the WCC steering committee for the real estate development project and the decision of the executive committee."

The steering committee **recommends** that executive committee:

(i) **decide** that WCC will proceed with the strategy to sell the project named "building E", together with its land;

(ii) **require** that if a sale is to be negotiated on a "goodwill" basis, that an appendix to the development contract be documented, ensuring that terms are clarified, and that the development contract remains the governing document for the working relationship with Implenia; and

(iii) **require** that a policy defining the restrictions to apply related to funds derived from the development be prepared for review by executive committee, and for approval by central committee in June 2018.

Discussion

Dr Quawas asked if the date at which it was expected that the Area Development Plan be approved could be added. Dr Tveit considered that the date was not known precisely, and that the exact date was not necessary in the context of the decision, in his opinion. Dr Quawas withdrew his suggestion.

It was proposed that one of the recommendations be revised with this wording:

"that the executive committee receive a report from the steering committee on the planned transaction process at its next meeting in November 2017".

Following this, the former (ii) and (iii) would become the new (iii) and (iv).

The first two recommendations were therefore revised as follows:

The steering committee **recommends** that Executive Committee:

(i) **affirm** that WCC will proceed with its strategy, and the first step will be the launch of the project named "building E", to be sold together with its land;

(ii) **receive** a report from the steering committee on the planned transaction process at its next meeting in November 2017;

There was further discussion about the revised recommendations.

Dr Quawas suggested that for recommendation (i), the wording "upon the approval of the executive committee" might be added. Dr Tveit observed that the requirement for executive committee's approval for the sale had already been affirmed in the decision of June 2016. In that context, the additional phrase was also acceptable.

The recommendations were therefore further revised, as noted below.

The steering committee **recommends** that executive committee:

(i) **affirm** that WCC will proceed with its strategy, and the first step will be the launch of the project named "building E", to be sold together with its land, further to the future decision of executive committee when the transaction is further prepared;

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

(ii) **receive** a report from the steering committee on the planned transaction process at its next meeting in November 2017;

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

(iii) **require** that if a sale is to be negotiated on a "goodwill" basis, that an appendix to the development contract be documented, ensuring that terms are clarified, and that the development contract remains the governing document for the working relationship with Implenia; and

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

(iv) **require** that a policy defining the restrictions to apply related to funds derived from the development be prepared for review by executive committee, and for approval by central committee in June 2018.

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

6.2.4. PRESENTATION FROM HOTEL CONSULTANT, PWC

The hotel consultant opened his presentation to the steering committee by stating that, in his view, the forthcoming Green Village hotel project would be one of the most attractive in Europe, given the strength of the Geneva hotel market in general, the location of the estate, and the fact that there are relatively few opportunities to build new hotels in the Geneva region.

The hotel consultant had reviewed two market studies, as launched by Implenia, in order to identify the type of hotel which might be most profitable within the Green Village project. He concurred with the principal conclusion of both studies, which indicated that a mid-range hotel would best fill market demand. The mid-range hotel was also the most profitable market segment.

In his view, both studies required further work to develop or complete the financial profiles. In his view, the financial profile presented was too conservative.

Both studies proposed that the standard operators be considered for the hotel. In the consultant's view, there required to be consideration given to alternative contract structures, including the lease contract. In

his view, more effort was required in identifying the most suitable type of hotel, taking into account "cultural fit" on the site. He cautioned against moving ahead too quickly with the development partner, and in particular warned against sending out a tender offer to potential operators before more background study has been accomplished to determine WCC's requirements.

The steering committee decided to continue the study of the evaluation of the hotel project, and the various options available, with the support of the consultant.

Note: Members and advisors present
Members present were Bishop Dr Mary Ann Swenson, H.E Archbishop Vicken Aykazian, Rev. Dr Paul Gardner and Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit. Apologies were received from H.E. Metropolitan Dr Vasilios of Constantia-Ammochostos, Rev. Laurent Schlumberger, Most Rev. Dr Chibuzo Raphael Opoko and Bishop Eva Brunne.

Dr Audeh Quawas attended as observer, as invited by the general secretary.

Maître Claire Bolsterli, lawyer, was present as legal advisor throughout.
Mr Nicolas Mayer, PwC, was present as hotel consultant for the agenda point concerned.

The executive committee received the report as a whole. The committee adopted the report as amended, using consensus.

6.3. ACTION ON THE REPORT OF THE FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE

Dr Abuom moderated a decision session and invited H.E. Archbishop Dr Aykazian to present the report.

6.3.1. FINANCIAL REPORT 2016 AND DETAILED REPORT OF THE AUDITORS

The financial statements 2016 reported total income of CHF 25 million, total expenditure and transfers of CHF 26.3 million, and a net decrease in funds and reserves of CHF 1.3 million. The general reserves closed at CHF 7.0 million, CHF 0.1 million higher than at December 2015, and CHF 0.7 million above the target set by central committee. A transfer of CHF 250,000 from the general reserves to the assembly fund was made, as approved by executive committee at its meeting in November 2016.

The finance sub-committee expressed gratitude to the member churches and ecumenical partners which support the Council with financial contributions, as well as through other means, including the hosting of meetings, participation in project work, secondments or other forms of collaboration.

The Financial Report 2016 had been approved and authorised for issue on 24 April 2017, further to the recommendation of the audit committee, and on the decision of the leadership of the finance sub-committee, to whom executive committee delegated authority for this action in November 2016.

It was noted that the detailed report of the auditors to the finance sub-committee raised one issue, rated as low-risk, namely, that WCC's IT systems' password policy was relatively weak. The auditors' recommendation that password parameters be enhanced will be implemented in 2017.

In July 2014, executive committee named PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) as the auditor for the period 2014-2018, subject to annual appointment.

The finance sub-committee **recommends** that executive committee:

(i) **adopt** the Financial Report 2016; and

(ii) **appoint** PwC as auditors for 2017, in accordance with Rule VIII 4 (vii) (a) (ii), and as recommended by the audit committee.

These recommendations were approved by consensus.

6.3.2. MONITORING FINANCIAL INDICATORS AND INCOME DEVELOPMENT MILESTONES, 2014-2017

The sub-committee reviewed a report setting out the achievements to date in relation to the outcome indicators included in the *WCC financial strategy 2014-2015*, together with a report on achievement of income development milestones (Doc. No. 06 Monitoring Indicators from Financial Strategy 2014-2017, including report on income development indicators).

In 2016, a total of 62% of member churches made a financial contribution (56% in 2015). Though an increasing percentage of participation is anticipated as the next assembly approaches, the milestone of 85% of member churches contributing is unlikely to be achieved in 2017. The sub-committee noted with appreciation that 67% of the churches that did contribute in 2016, contributed more than in 2015 in original currency.

The committee affirmed that the approach adopted of reporting regularly against monitoring indicators has proved to be a useful tool for overseeing the finances of the Council.

6.3.3. TOWARDS THE INCOME DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2018-2021

The Financial Strategy 2018-2021 will include a new income development strategy. The finance sub-committee reviewed an outline and proposed directions for a new income development strategy, cf. Progress with WCC Financial Strategy 2018 to 2021: Draft for Discussion (Doc. No. 08).

The 2018-2021 income development strategy will build on current efforts, highlighting what is working and what can be strengthened. It will include strategies to maintain and increase contributions income. It will also refer to different strategies of cooperation to help finance the work of the fellowship. It will address the need for a fundraising advisory group.

The strategy 2018-2021 will continue the Busan Assembly contributions plan, seeking to increase the number of churches contributing and asking churches to give more each year, as they are able. Membership contributions are expected to generate CHF 4.0 million each year.

With regard to programme contributions, the new strategy will be based on a refined analysis of contributions by type/source, recognizing that not all contributions are the same and that different strategies are needed to maintain and strengthen different types/sources of income. Programme contributions are expected to generate between CHF 13.5 and 14.5 million each year.

The strategy will also include fundraising for the next assembly, seeking to raise additional funds of up to CHF 4.0 million for the 11th assembly.

The finance sub-committee **recommends** that the executive committee **require** that a draft income development strategy 2018-2021, with milestones, be presented to the executive committee in November 2017, with a view toward presenting a final strategy for adoption by the central committee in 2018.

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

6.3.4. DRAFT FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2018-2021

The finance sub-committee reviewed the report on progress with the financial strategy 2018-2021, which included indicators.

The finance sub-committee noted that the financial strategy gathered together all aspects of the Council's work planned for 2018-2021, encompassing not only the dimension of programme, but also assembly funding, the building project, the Bossey guest house and conference centre, aspects of management of the Ecumenical Centre facilities, and the first draft of objectives for support services work for programmes.

The sub-committee considered the ways in which the Green Village project would impact the finances in the transition period 2018-2021. It was noted that during that time, two wings and the former library should be demolished; and that the possible net adverse impact on general reserves from the loss of rental income from 2019-2021 was estimated at CHF 1.5 million in total for the three years. The sub-committee affirmed the continued target of 15% of total programme income as a limit for net infrastructure costs to programme.

The sub-committee affirmed the indicator which referred to the recruitment of an additional staff member, trained in architecture, to work with the WCC in the development of its own building (or buildings) for a four-year period. The sub-committee observed that the sister organisations should also be consulted in the process of design of WCC's office building.

The possible financial profile for the 11th assembly was reviewed. It was noted that in order to offer funding of delegates' participation at the level achieved at the 10th assembly, venue costs to be covered within WCC's own budget would require to be relatively modest.

> The finance sub-committee **recommends** that the executive committee **require** that work continue on the draft financial strategy, and that the second draft be presented at the executive committee meeting in November 2017, in preparation for submission to central committee in June 2018.

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

6.3.5. JOINT SESSION: PROGRAMME SUB-COMMITTEE AND FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE

The programme and finance sub-committees met to review the financial scenarios in the draft financial strategy. The stable scenario presented an average level of programme contributions for 2018-2021 of CHF 18 million, being a level about CHF 1 million less than the average programme contributions gratefully received (or forecast) for 2014-2017.

In this context, the sub-committees discussed the approach to prioritisation when considering programme objectives for the period 2018-2021. The continued relevance of the guidelines for prioritisation defined in 2015 was affirmed, and in addition, the importance and the potential of strengthening the fellowship through increased communication work were highlighted.

It was confirmed that meetings between the two sub-committees are to be scheduled at future executive committee meetings.

The finance sub-committee **recommends** that executive committee **require** that the general secretary ensure that communication work be accorded a degree of priority in plans and budgets for the period 2018-2021.

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

6.3.6 CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

The sub-committee reviewed a report on capital expenditure 2016 and 2017 and on planned expenditure for 2018 and 2019. A revised budget for 2017 was presented with total capital expenditure of CHF 539,000 (approved budget: CHF 518,000). The reason for the slight revision requested is that the installation of car park barriers at the Ecumenical Centre had been planned for 2016, was delayed, and has now been realised in 2017.

Capital expenditure in 2016 reached CHF 509,000 (budget: CHF 490,000). Major individual items of expenditure concerned the installation of a new sound system in the Visser ‘t Hooft Hall at the Ecumenical Centre, and the re-surfacing of the Bossey access road.

The finance sub-committee **recommends** that Executive Committee **approve** the revised budget for capital expenditure 2017 at CHF 539,000.

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

6.3.7. GENERAL RESERVES

The sub-committee received a financial model setting out the evolution of the general reserves during the years 2018-2021, assuming balanced programme budgets for the period, as well as break-even results at the Bossey guest house and conference centre. Estimated charges to the general reserves as a result of loss in rental income from 2019-2021 were included. The model showed that under the various assumptions, the general reserves fell slightly below target in 2021, when transfers from the reserves for the assembly fund were included.

The finance sub-committee **recommends** that executive committee **require** that the general reserves policy be reviewed by central committee in 2018, and the target level for the years 2018-2021 be confirmed or re-assessed.

Discussion

Dr Quawas considered that the role of central committee might not be to review the general reserves policy, which should rather be reviewed by the finance sub-committee, for consideration by executive committee, and for submission to central committee for approval.

Dr Abuom concurred with the process described by Dr Quawas.

The revised recommendation was as follows:

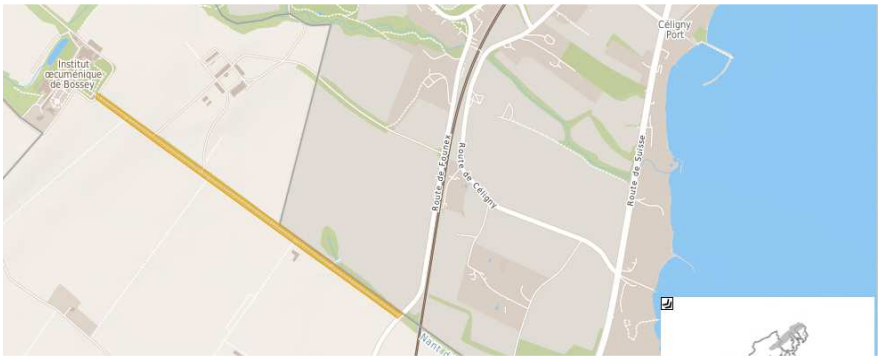
The finance sub-committee **recommends** that executive committee **require** that the general reserves policy be reviewed at its next meeting, in preparation for submission to central committee in 2018, when the target level for the years 2018-2021 should be confirmed or re-assessed.

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

6.3.8. PATHWAY AT THE CHÂTEAU DE BOSSEY

Following an informal conversation between the Founex Commune and the business manager of the Bossey guest house and conference centre, the Founex Commune has invited the WCC to consider the transfer to the commune of the ownership of the unsurfaced road or pathway that runs in a straight line from the boundary of the Bossey estate down towards the lake. The Council does not own land on either side of this unsurfaced road but, as owner, is required to maintain it. The land value is minimal and it is likely that the transfer will be proposed for a notional sum only. If transferred to public ownership, maintenance and upkeep would become the responsibility of the Commune.

The land concerned is plot No 232 and is shown in yellow on the plan below.



The finance sub-committee **recommends** that executive committee **approve** the continued discussion with the Founex Commune with the objective of transferring plot 232 to its ownership, obtaining legal advice as required, and **authorise** the general secretary to decide on the execution of the transfer deeds.

Discussion

Dr Quawas asked for confirmation that the road would remain open for us, and would not be transferred by the Commune to any third party.

Archbishop Vicken replied that the road will remain open and will be protected by the authorities and Dr Tveit added that the path will become a public road, and the Commune will take responsibility for maintenance costs.

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

6.3.9. INVESTMENTS

A report on investment results to December 2016 and to April 2017 was reviewed.

The general investment fund of CHF 7 million is managed under conservative investment guidelines with an objective of capital preservation. The sub-committee noted that the fund had suffered negative interest charges in 2016, following the Swiss National Bank's decision to implement negative interest on deposits

held in Swiss francs. The finance sub-committee concurred with the proposal from the investment manager that the investment guidelines be revised in order to reduce the level of cash deposits to 15%, and increase the allocation to 20% corporate bond funds in Swiss francs and 65 % money market funds. The revised guidelines remained conservative, while avoiding the certainty of loss of capital from negative interest charges. The funds remain invested subject to the investment policy and its ethical investment guidelines.

6.3.10. OTHER MATTERS

(i) Fund for priority areas

The sub-committee received a report on the fund for priority areas, created in 2015 with a value of CHF 340,000. The report showed that allocations of CHF 106,000 from the fund had been made in 2016 and that further allocations for the remaining balance of CHF 234,000 are forecast for 2017, which, if realised, will fully utilise the fund.

(ii) Compliance with policy for offices outside Switzerland

The sub-committee received a report on compliance with the policy for offices outside Switzerland. It was reported that further progress had been made in ensuring that staff in the EHAIA offices in Africa were employed in accordance with local labour laws, through agency agreements. There was now compliance for offices in Togo, DRC and Kenya. Efforts continued to find solutions for offices in Angola and Zimbabwe. The sub-committee requested that a report on the status be brought to the next meeting.

(iii) Actions on recommendations from prior meetings

As at each of its meetings, the sub-committee reviewed a report on actions taken from prior meetings. The committee noted that all of the matters on which recommendations had been made at its meeting in November 2016 had been either actioned, or were on the agenda of this meeting.

(iv) Report of the pension committee

The report of the pension committee will be presented at the next executive committee meeting in November 2017.

The report of the finance sub-committee as a whole was adopted by consensus.

H.E. Archbishop Dr Vicken Aykazian offered thanks to the staff for their work in preparing the meeting.

7. Programme

7.1. FIRST PRESENTATION ON PROGRAMME

7.1.1. PILGRIMAGE OF JUSTICE AND PEACE

Dr Abuom moderated a hearing session and welcomed the members of the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace (PJP) Theological Study Group, who had joined the meeting for the session. Ms Jennifer P. Martin (co-moderator, Reference Group on Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace) shared highlights of the work of the Theological Study Group.

Since 2016, the group had made progress in their mandated tasks:

- The creation of a 6-page booklet, making clear what the PJP is about: this is done.
- To prepare a total of 12 Bible studies: 6 have been done.
- To produce a book with 4-6 lively ecumenical contributions on theology of the PJP: this work is well on the way.
- A collection on the Lord's Prayer: this work has started.
- Writing blogs: some of this has been done.
- An actual ecumenical pilgrimage: some of this has been done, and people are very interested.
- The creation of regional publications, with interpretations of the PJP: different regions are all at different stages with the publications. By the end of 2017 all regions will have published their books except Latin America. This one will come out in 2018.

The publications planned will talk about what is meant by peace, what the word of God says to us about it and how as Christians, the fullness of life includes justice and peace. Each region will compile a publication about how they are seeking to work together for fullness of life in those regions. They are ensuring that, at all levels of readership and across generations.

In terms of the PJP reference group, their meeting in 2017 took place in Nigeria where there were opportunities to have deep and meaningful conversations with Christians and Muslims. The Nigerians saw this as an act of great commitment on behalf of the WCC that the group would go to the places of the wounded to walk with them, to go with them and look at photos of martyred persons, to be able to comment on who was at the table, and to experience the necessity of moving a theological seminary because the place where it was located is no longer safe.

She reminded the committee that the PJP process will highlight each region in some way with 2018 being focused on Latin America and the Caribbean.

Also planned is a joint consultation with ACT Alliance, with a focus on Ecumenical Diakonia and Sustainable Development. Pilgrim team visits are being worked upon as well. Prof. Dr Isabel Apawo Phiri (WCC, deputy general secretary) shared following the recommendations of the November 2016 meeting of the executive committee meeting, pilgrim visits were being organized but not only by the WCC Geneva office. Churches should be encouraged to form team visits to other parts of the world. A seconded staff from the Global Board of General Ministries of the United Methodist Church will coordinate the work of the pilgrim team visits.

The moderator offered thanks for the update and opened the floor for discussion.

Ms Kambarami shared that ACT Alliance is excited to be part of the PJP. She highlighted the joint day that will be held with the executive committee meeting in November 2018. This will be the last day of the ACT Alliance general assembly and first day of the executive committee meeting. The theme for this joint day will be on diakonia, and she reflected that this fits into the theme of the PJP.

Regarding the recommendations that had come from the gender advisory group at the last central committee meeting, Rev. Dr Hyunju Bae said that, like in the Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women 30 years ago, the pilgrim visits, be grounded in a theology of accompaniment, with a focus on women's experiences in each continent.

Dr Abuom thanked everyone for their contributions, and shared that the programme sub-committee can go into more detail on the points that have been raised.

7.1.2. CONFERENCE ON WORLD MISSION AND EVANGELISM

H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima moderated a hearing session.

He introduced Metropolitan Dr Mor Geevarghese Coorilos, moderator of CWME and Rev. Dr Jooseop Keum, director of CWME to offer an update on the upcoming Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME) Conference on World Mission and Evangelism, which will be held in Arusha, Tanzania. 8-13 March 2018.

The theme of the conference is: Moving in the Spirit: Called to Transforming Discipleship based is "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit" (Galatians 5:25). A detailed update of themes, sub-themes, methodology, expected participation, link with the local/regional context of Africa, the global ecumenical theological institute, the financial situation and expected results of the conference was presented to the committee.

Metropolitan Gennadios offered thanks for the comprehensive presentation, and opened the floor for questions.

In response to several questions, Metropolitan Coorilos shared that CWME will be going back to Africa after 50 years (Accra 1968). He said that there would be one plenary on pilgrimage, and also workshops that will look at the PJP. There will be local involvement in the conference through a large choir, local and regional stewards and GETI students, as well as through local church visits. However, for security reasons because of the rise of Al Shebaab and the rise of terrorism in eastern Africa, the conference will take place on one secure campus rather than in the city.

Metropolitan Gennadios offered thanks for the presentation and wished God's blessing on the conference.

7.1.3. MID-TERM EVALUATION UPDATE

Dr Abuom moderated a hearing session inviting Mr Douglas Chial to offer his presentation.

He went over the process leading to the update including the work of the central committee in establishing a Strategic Plan in 2014 to guide the work of the WCC until the next assembly. The strategy includes two four-year planning periods (2014-2017 and 2018-2021), along with a mid-term evaluation.

The evaluation is first and foremost a learning exercise seeking to respond to the question: How does the WCC Strategic Plan help connect *who we are* as a fellowship of churches *with what we do*? The mid-term evaluation will help to assess how the Strategic Plan enhances the relevance and achievements of the WCC as a fellowship of churches, calling one another to visible unity and engaged in a common Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace.

He reminded the committee of the methodologies used and the timeline for delivering the evaluation to the central committee at its meeting in 2018.

Preliminary findings suggest there are opportunities to strengthen the existing plan through integration and communication, making the strategic plan more visible, readable, popular, with a better use of strategic objectives. The alignment of objectives, by bridging the gap between strategic objectives and WCC activities and developing smarter objectives and indicators will also improve the strategic plan.

The MTE team sees the second period, 2018-2021 as the opportunity to strengthen integration, communication, and alignment.

In terms of the development of the next plan 2022-2030, sequencing and synchronicity are important so that the strategic plan guides programmatic and operation planning. A draft of the Strategic Plan 2022-2030 will be available in 2020 for approval in 2021 and implementation in 2022.

With thanks for the presentation, Dr Abuom opened the floor for comments and questions from the committee members. She drew attention to the finance document where some of the key learnings were presented in terms of more capacity and some of the areas where we need to bridge. In response to a question Mr Chial said that the impact of the churches on the WCC is being documented. In a document tabled to the MTE in June about the work of the WCC and the Strategic Plan how many churches have been involved in what kinds of activities has been recorded. This information was not available before and the team is making progress in monitoring how many churches and how many partners are involved in what kind of work and making what kind of contributions.

The session was closed with thanks for the active participation.

7.1.4. REPORTS 2016

Dr Abuom noted that this session was for receiving several programme reports as found in Doc. No. 14.

General Secretariat

Various staff were invited to present form each of the programme areas. The following were highlighted:

General secretariat

- The general secretary is tasked to accompanying the churches and does this through visits to all the regions, witnessing to and with the churches around the world.
- The library and archives staff have been preparing for moving the archives as it is the building which will be demolished first as the Green Village project gets underway.

Unity, Mission, Ecumenical Relations

- Youth engagement in the ecumenical movement – the youth had a great meeting in Cairo in December with both Christians and Muslims engaging on religion and violence.
- Bossey Ecumenical Institute - after years of struggle, the first PhD candidate completed his work last week and by the end of this week three would have completed the programme.
- Ecumenical relations – in this area work was done on the Global Christian Forum, the Joint Working Group on Roman Catholic-WCC dialogue, the Pontifical Council on Christian Unity, the Pontifical Council for Migrant People as well as the World Evangelical Alliance, and Pentecostal World Fellowship.

Just Community of Women and Men, Public Witness and Diakonia, PJP, Human Sexuality

- A workshop on peace building and reconciliation in June 2016 took place about those who have gone through conflict including delegates from priority countries: Burundi, Colombia, DRC, Nigeria, Palestine, South Africa, South Sudan, and Sudan.
- A workshop on the prevention of incitement of atrocities was conducted in Beirut, Lebanon with 40 participants aiming at helping churches work together with faith-based organizations and ecumenical partners to see how they can help each other on how to do advocacy.

- The international conference on peace, reconciliation, and reunification of the Korean peninsula, focusing on the peace treaty on the Korean peninsula was held in Hong Kong in November 2016.
- Several meetings on solidarity and witness for peace, religious extremism in Syria and the Middle East have taken between the Christians and Muslims to see what Syria could look like after the conflict.
- A research project on solidarity and advocacy for affected communities, sponsored by the Norwegian government is also taking place, on how the affected communities can be protected.
- Accompaniment of the churches in South Sudan in initiatives for peace and reconciliation has continued.
- The general secretary led a delegation of the ecumenical partners to go to Burundi to speak to the Roman Catholic Church to work together for peace in Burundi in March 2016.
- A Governance and Economics Management (GEM) school took place in Hong Kong in cooperation with the Lutheran World Federation, where 14 church leaders went through training on how to do advocacy on economic issues.
- The work of the Ecumenical Water Network (EWN) led to the WCC becoming a Blue Community. What is significant about the work of the EWN was the 7 weeks for water in the Middle East, which brought the WCC into conflict with the Israeli government over work of water justice.
- The work on HIV/AIDS is working well together between Ecumenical HIV and AIDS Initiatives and Advocacy (EHAIA) and the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance (EAA).

Following the staff presentations, Dr Abuom invited Dr Watkins to present the rest of the document.

The Ecumenical Diakonia Study Document has been completed and is being presented to the executive committee for approval prior to sending it to the member churches, theological institutions and ecumenical partners for comment and feedback. The same document has been presented at the ACT Alliance and LWF governing bodies meetings. It will also be presented at the Ecumenical Strategic Forum on Diakonia in October as the initial reception and comment opportunity. The revised document will be presented to the central committee in June 2018.

Among the points raised in the discussion was a request for a study guide to assist those engaging with the document. The issue of membership of the WCC member churches in ACT Alliance was also brought up and would be discussed in the programme sub-committee.

The other updates mentioned were:

- Report of the Evaluation of the WCC-EAA
- Churches' Commitment to Children
- Gender Advisory Group
- CCIA Meeting

Some questions of Orthodox representation on various advisory groups was brought to the attention of the executive committee and the Orthodox members decided to meet in the break to discuss this and bring back a recommendation. Absenteeism on the commissions and advisory groups was also an issue which concerned the executive committee following the updates.

Ms Marianne Ejdersten (WCC director, communication) was then invited to share the communication plans with the committee. At the Trondheim central committee the focus for communication was put on capacity building. The team is also focusing on fellowship communication where the challenge is how to reach out, and how to inspire. A review of publications and journals has also begun and this will be

followed up with several strategies, including branding and internal communications. She provided several examples of work done in conjunction with the programme areas to make the work known.

These matters were referred to the programme sub-committee.

Some time was then spent on a review of the EAPPI programme. At this meeting the executive committee would be asked to re-affirm the WCC-EAPPI as a WCC initiative. The goal was to enhance collaboration and foster mutual dialogue with the church leaders in Jerusalem. A long-term action plan (2018-2021) would be presented for further discussion and approval.

Preparation for this had included the annual meeting in March 2017 which included national coordinators from 22 countries, representatives of churches, councils of churches, and some of the EAPPI Jerusalem staff, as well as WCC staff and leadership. All participants re-affirmed the importance of working together on this unique ecumenical initiative amid occupation of the Palestine territories, which turns 50 this year. In this and the previous meeting there was a struggle to achieve consensus on structure and processes enabling their work together. A common understanding of the different roles has not yet been achieved. The March meeting discussed a revised governance structure in cooperation with ecumenical partners. This means bringing it into better alignment with WCC processes for decision making, governance and advocacy for a just peace in Palestine and Israel. The meeting also received information on the consultative process now being launched for the articulation of a new programme strategic plan. This will strengthen the programme for its original intention and present need.

The following were brought up in the discussion which followed:

- The church leaders felt that the national meetings were dominated by the national coordinators, and that they were not being listened to. The general secretary received feedback from his recent meetings in Jerusalem and the church leaders appreciate that the WCC is taking a more proactive role in exercising its leadership in this programme, clarifying the memorandum of understanding with partners, and a more proactive involvement with the leadership of the WCC.
- The local government of Palestine is very much encouraged by EAPPI and appreciated the work of the WCC in the region. Dr Tveit shared that in his conversation with President Mahmoud Abbas in Geneva, the president appreciated EAPPI and encouraged WCC to continue the programme.
- The WCC has for many years discussed how to be advocates for justice and peace in Palestine and Israel issuing many statements, and engaging advocacy in a non-violent way as our model. Over the past 10 years, since the Amman meeting in 2007, there has been a group called the Palestine-Israel Ecumenical Forum (PIEF) discussing four tracks for work: theological reflection; supporting the local churches; supporting the churches advocacy work; and other non-violent economic measure that could be observed in the policies of the WCC.
- There are also discussions in many churches regarding boycotting companies involved in occupation activities. However there was never a call for the WCC to boycott the state of Israel.
- There has been a critique against the Israeli government since 1967 regarding the policies of the occupation but the WCC has not attached itself to the BDS movement for boycotting and sanctions.

Dr Abuom mentioned several issues from the discussions which would need to be addressed by the programme sub-committee:

- gaps that need to be filled
- the findings of the mid-term evaluation in terms of integration
- recruitment of students to Bossey, and how that process can be improved

- inclusiveness of the member church families, particularly the Orthodox participation in commissions, reference groups, and governance groups
- WCC's relationship with ACT Alliance
- integration processes of EAA and
- Terms of reference for EAPPI

The session concluded with a moment of silence to remember the people in Israel and Palestine, and in areas where we have been praying for peace and the general secretary offered a prayer to close the session.

7.2. ACTION ON THE REPORT OF THE PROGRAMME SUB-COMMITTEE

Dr Abuom moderated a decision session and invited Dr Watkins, moderator of the programme sub-committee, to present the report.

7.2.1 REPORT OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY (DOC. NO. 01)

The programme sub-committee recommends that the executive committee:

- receive with appreciation the Report of the General Secretary,
- express gratitude for his raising the important issue of unity and initiating the subsequent conversation, and
- affirm the work of the general secretary, Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit, and of the WCC staff.

The sub-committee noted that visible unity, as the vision of the WCC, is also reflected in diakonia and witness. Service and witness are expressions of the mission of the church (cf. John 17:23).

7.2.2. FOLLOW-UP ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRAMMATIC WORK (DOC. NO. 15)

The programme sub-committee recommends that the executive committee receive with appreciation the update on follow-up to the executive committee's recommendations on programmatic work (Doc. No. 15) with the following comment:

> Point c: the document exploring the issue of religion and violence has been revised based on comments made at the meeting of the interreligious dialogue reference group, which met in October 2016, and at the executive committee that took place in Shanghai and Nanjing, China, in November 2016. It will now be further revised to strengthen the reflection on systemic violence and will then be shared with the interreligious dialogue reference group at their forthcoming meeting in September 2017. The intention is that, as a result of the discussion and comments made at that meeting, the revised document will be affirmed by the reference group, and after this it will be brought to the November 2017 executive committee meeting.

7.2.3. WCC 70TH ANNIVERSARY (DOC. NO. 28 AND 29)

The programme sub-committee forwarded the following recommendations to the staffing, personnel and nomination sub-committee of the executive committee to:

- *affirm the general direction of the plans for the WCC 70th anniversary related to the programme activities, with a reminder to include the activities in the programme budget for 2018,*
- *receive the first draft of the communication strategy and graphic design for the WCC 70th anniversary,*

- *invite and encourage the churches at local and regional levels to participate in the celebration of 70th anniversary of the WCC.*

7.2.4. PROGRAMME REPORTS 2016 (DOC. NO. 14)

The programme sub-committee received with appreciation and affirmed the document. It discussed the following:

a. The format of the summary is helpful. It gives a full overview without being overwhelmed by details. The programme sub-committee sees this as a good format for presenting the plans for 2018 with slight editorial changes, including an executive summary and analysis from the staff leadership group.
b. The programme sub-committee wishes to receive the entire report.

The programme sub-committee recommends to the executive committee to receive with appreciation the 2016 reports with the following comments:

- review recruitment strategies for the Bossey Ecumenical Institute, including its recruitment process, recruitment plans, and strengthen communication with member churches and church leaders, including former Bossey students.
- encourage students, in cases of extreme difficulty getting visas to come to Bossey, to participate in other WCC leadership formation programmes in other parts of the world,
- request for direct communication to the leadership of the churches from the general secretary regarding the recruitment of the students for Bossey Ecumenical Institute.

7.2.5. REPORT OF THE REFERENCE GROUP ON THE PILGRIMAGE OF JUSTICE AND PEACE

The programme sub-committee recommends to the executive committee to receive with appreciation the report from the Reference Group on the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace, with the following comments for the general secretary to:

Recommendation No. 3:
Affirms the regional and country priorities as listed in the report.
As Asia becomes the focus region in 2019, and the Korean peninsula is one of the priority areas, attention should be given to the impacts of the Korean peninsula to the geopolitical situation in the whole Asian region.

Should North America be the venue of the PJP pre-assembly meeting in 2021, the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA and Canadian Council of Churches should be notified and involved in planning as soon as possible.

Recommendation No. 6:
Pilgrimage initiatives of the churches should be considered as part of the overall programme of the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace. It is advisable to make the pilgrimage's groups more inclusive, including people from other churches and cultures.

Recommendation No. 10b and c:
Recommend a review of the language, concerning expressions such as "sacred scriptures", "Sacred Texts" or "holy texts." A wording neutral in character, such as "religious scriptural texts" would be preferable.

The programme sub-committee noted the absence of Orthodox participation in the PJP reference group and the theological study group, and asks the general secretary to ensure that this problem is addressed.

In response to a question of clarification, Dr Watkins noted that they would like this to be clear. The intent was to focus on the Asian continent as a whole. The intent was to say that as Asian becomes the focus region, so this is where our attention should be drawn first, and knowing that within this, there is a particular focus on the Korean peninsula. Even within that particular focus, it was in reference to the region of the whole. Dr Abuom affirmed that the PJP reference group will also discuss other countries in Asia and how to address them, so it is not closed.

7.2.6. CONFERENCE ON WORLD MISSION AND EVANGELISM UPDATE (DOC. NO. 16)

The programme sub-committee recommends to the executive committee to receive with appreciation the Conference on World Mission and Evangelism Update with the following comments for the general secretary to consider:

- continue to reflect on how to highlight the role of pilgrimage from Accra to Arusha,
- how to integrate and highlight the pilgrimage of justice and peace in the Conference on World Mission and Evangelism,
- draw attention to the wording in the invitation, such as "we share God's nature", which may lead to serious theological misapprehensions[1].

7.2.7. TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE WCC-EAPPI IRG (DOC. NO. 22)

The programme sub-committee recommends to the executive committee to receive the Terms of Reference of the WCC-EAPPI International Reference Group (IRG) with appreciation for the simplification of the management structure. It is recommended that the general secretary consider:

- continuing to monitor the implementation of the WCC-EAPPI IRG,
- appointing IRG members with rotation from countries, regions and communions,
- securing the role of the local churches in the programme as advisors,
- strengthening the involvement of the global South in the profile of the programme,
- strengthening the internal communication with the stakeholders,
- and following the WCC structure for all ecumenical initiatives.

Discussion

In the discussion which followed Dr Quawas felt strongly that the coordinator needs more support from the local people and the local church. A local reference group, when it is established, needs different people from different parts of the occupation. The local group does not add a level of decision makers but is advisory to help and communicate with the Palestinian Christians what is going on.

The following addition was made to the terms of reference "establishing a local advisory group, as advisor to the programmes".

This addition was agreed to, by consensus.

[1] "Theosis" or deification the church's early theologians meant participation in the divine grace that, as a consequence, makes its participants by grace adopted sons or children of God (see *Gal*., 3:26 "For in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith"; Athanasius, *Ad Serapionem Ar*, PG 26, 600B). To say that we share **God's nature** (*φύσις*) leads to serious theological misapprehensions and misinterpretations (Athanasius, *De decretis Nicaenae synodi*, Athanasius Werke, vol. 2.1, 14.5.14.5ed. Opitz, H.G., Berlin: De Gruyter, 1940).

7.2.8 REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION OF THE CHURCHES ON INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS (CCIA)

The report from the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA) was not presented in time for the meeting and will be referred to the November 2017 Executive Committee meeting.

7.2.9 UPDATE ON CHURCHES' COMMITMENTS TO CHILDREN

The programme sub-committee recommends to the executive committee to receive with appreciation the update on Churches' Commitments to Children and notes that members of executive committee have a role to play in promoting the work within the fellowship.

7.2.10 JOINT PROGRAMME MEETING WITH THE PROGRAMME SUB-COMMITTEE AND THE FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE

The programme sub-committee held a meeting with the finance sub-committee in which the financial situation and analyses for the period of 2018-2021 were discussed, including a discussion on revised parameters for prioritization and formulating criteria for bringing to an end any ecumenical initiative or project.

Another meeting will take place at the executive committee in November 2017, focussing on revised criteria for programmes and a revised financial strategy.

The programme sub-committee and finance sub-committee recommend that the executive committee prioritize resources for communication for 2018-2021 to strengthen relations with member churches, international partners and ecumenical partners.

7.2.11 MID-TERM EVALUATION UPDATE, AND RENEWAL OF STRATEGIC PLAN (DOC. NO. 13)

The programme sub-committee recommends to the executive committee to receive with appreciation the Mid-Term Evaluation Update, affirming the preliminary conclusions in first review.

It is noted that attention should be given to bridge the strategic and programmatic objectives in the renewal of the strategic plan.

7.2.12. REPORT FROM THE GENDER ADVISORY GROUP (DOC. NO. 20)

The programme sub-committee recommends to the executive committee to receive with appreciation the Report from the Gender Advisory Group.

It was noted:

- The CWME has taken seriously the concerns of the Gender Advisory Group.
- Women's pilgrimages are recommended as part of the PJP programme to the conflict areas of South Sudan, Burundi, DRC and Nigeria.
- Discrimination and violence against women should continue to be addressed in partnership with member churches in the respective countries.

The programme sub-committee noted the absence of Oriental Orthodox participation in the Gender Advisory Group and asks the general secretary to ensure that this problem is addressed.

7.2.13. ECUMENICAL DIAKONIA STUDY DOCUMENT (DOC. NO. 17)

The programme sub-committee recommends to the executive committee to receive the Ecumenical Diakonia Study document with appreciation.

The executive committee asks the general secretary to invite member churches, regional ecumenical organizations and national councils of churches to respond to the document. The executive committee asks that a study guide be prepared to accompany the diakonia document to facilitate response. While sharing the documents with the churches for response, this is also an opportunity to enhance the relationship between churches and ACT Alliance.

7.2.14. EVALUATION OF WCC-ECUMENICAL ADVOCACY ALLIANCE (DOC. NO. 23) AND MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE REPORT OF THE EVALUATION OF WCC-ECUMENICAL ADVOCACY ALLIANCE (DOC. NO. 23.1)

The programme sub-committee recommends to the executive committee to receive with appreciation the Evaluation Report of WCC-Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance and the Management response to the Report of the Evaluation of WCC-Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance (Doc. No 23.1). We affirm the "way forward" as described in the Management Response. Further, we ask the general secretary to:

- Strengthen the communication and engage partners with regard to fundraising".
- Set the criteria more generally for the WCC ecumenical initiatives for financial participation and partnership.

7.2.15. COMMUNICATION UPDATE (DOC. NO. 25)

The programme sub-committee recommends to the executive committee to receive with appreciation the Communication Update.

It also recommends a review of the WCC website and affirms the continued development of communication from the perspective of the living fellowship of churches as mandated by the Busan assembly.

The entire report of the programme sub-committee was adopted by consensus.

8. Public Issues

8.1. FIRST PRESENTATION ON PUBLIC ISSUES

Dr Abuom moderated a hearing session.

She invited Mr Peter Prove (WCC CCIA director) to present the public issues for consideration. He noted that there are currently two draft texts for consideration:

- Statement on 50 Years of Occupation
- Statement on Ecumenical Engagement for Peace, Reconciliation and Reunification on the Korean Peninsula

He noted that it is the persistence of occupation and the violence that pertains to this first text.

The second text is inspired by recent developments—notably the discussions with the South Korean president held last week—as well as the WCC initiatives since the 2013 Busan assembly, and the strong affirmation for peace and reunification for the peninsula at that time. There was also a consultation and conference in November, in Hong Kong which focused on promoting a peace treaty for the Korean peninsula.

Mr Prove shared that there will be a third text presented shortly to address issues related to climate change, and the withdrawal of the US from the Paris climate agreement.

He shared that there are two other initiatives that may come to the table:
- Situation in the Philippines
- Attacks in London and Tehran

Mr Prove noted that these are the issues that he is currently aware of, but other issues can and likely will emerge during the course of their discussions.

Bishop Samuel Azariah reminded us about the resurgence of the Taliban in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Bishop Rosemarie Wenner (World Methodist Council) offered a prayer to close the session.

8.2. ACTION ON THE REPORT OF THE PUBLIC ISSUES SUB-COMMITTEE

Dr Abuom moderated a decision session and invited the executive committee to enter into a moment of silence. Dr Phiri opened the session with a prayer.

H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Nifon of Targoviste, moderator of the public issues sub-committee was invited to present the report.

8.2.1 ACTIONS ON PUBLIC ISSUES (DOC. NO. 11)

The public issues sub-committee reviewed the summary of Actions on Public Issues (Doc. No. 11), and refers it to the executive committee for information.

8.2.2. STATEMENT ON 50 YEARS OF OCCUPATION (INCORPORATED IN DOC. NO. 12 FINAL)

The public issues sub-committee received and considered a draft statement on 50 Years of Occupation, regarding the situation in Palestine and Israel. The draft was prepared by staff, in consultation with and including input from members of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs and other stakeholders.

The public issues sub-committee recommends the revised draft statement for adoption by the executive committee as read in the plenary.

The executive committee approved the statement by consensus. The full statement can be read on

http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/executive-committee/bossey-june-2017/statement-on-50-years-of-occupation.

8.2.3. STATEMENT ON ECUMENICAL ENGAGEMENT FOR PEACE, RECONCILIATION AND REUNIFICATION ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA (INCORPORATED IN DOC. NO. 12 FINAL)

The public issues sub-committee received and reviewed a draft statement on Ecumenical Engagement for Peace, Reconciliation and Reunification on the Korean Peninsula, considering initiatives undertaken by the WCC since the WCC 10th Assembly in Busan, South Korea, including the general secretary's recent meeting with newly-elected President of South Korea, Mr Moon Jae-in. The statement was prepared by staff in consultation with and including input from members of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs and other stakeholders.

The public issues sub-committee recommends the revised draft statement for adoption by the executive committee. During the discussion, there were no other suggested changes to be made to the text.

The executive committee approved the statement by consensus. The full statement can be read on http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/executive-committee/bossey-june-2017/statement-on-ecumenical-engagement-for-peace-reconciliation-and-reunification-on-the-korean-peninsula.

8.2.4 STATEMENT ON THE US GOVERNMENT'S WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PARIS AGREEMENT ON CLIMATE CHANGE (INCORPORATED IN DOC. NO. 12 FINAL)

The public issues sub-committee received and considered a draft statement on the US Government's Withdrawal from the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. The draft had been prepared by staff members directly responsible for WCC's work on climate change, and subject to consultation with and including input from members of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs and other stakeholders.

The public issues sub-committee recommends the revised draft statement for adoption by the executive committee.

Mr Prove read the draft statement.

Dr Abuom invited the executive committee to make comments.

With some small amendments, the executive committee approved the statement by consensus. The full statement can be read on http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/executive-committee/bossey-june-2017/statement-on-the-us-government2019s-withdrawal-from-the-paris-agreement-on-climate-change.

8.2.5. OTHER ISSUES

Situation in the Philippines

The public issues sub-committee received information - via the Ecumenical Indigenous Peoples' Network Reference Group - on the situation in the Philippines, especially concerning the declaration of martial law in Mindanao. In addition, it received further information concerning the arrest and continuing detention of Bishop Carlos Morales of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente (Philippine Independent Church), a WCC member church.

> The public issues sub-committee recommends that these matters be referred to the general secretary for appropriate action and follow-up.

During the discussion which followed, a further explanation was provided for the plenary. The situation is that Bishop Carlos Morales, who was very active in prompting dialogue to resolve tensions, was apprehended in the new days of the government, as he was travelling with his wife and a consultant of one of the armed groups. All were apprehended. The wife and driver were later released. But the bishop and member of the armed group were charged. The charges against him were false. The bishop was pursing his responsibilities as a peacemaker, and not as a supporter of armed violence.

Mr Prove added that the general secretary has already written on this matter to the president of the Philippines. They have also written to the Philippine ambassador in Geneva. This request, however, has not been responded to. With the encouragement of the committee the Dr Tveit stated that there will be urgent follow up on the specific situation about the bishop. Another statement, if it is still relevant, about the general situation in the Philippines can be prepared once more information is available.

London and Teheran attacks

> The public issues sub-committee also considered the possibility of a statement on the most recent violent attacks in London (3 June) and Teheran (7 June). However, it considered that these matters could be addressed in a timelier manner by the general secretary, and advised him accordingly. A WCC news release on these attacks based on comments by the general secretary was issued on 9 June.

The report of the public issues sub-committee was approved by consensus.

9. Staffing, Personnel, and Nominations

9.1. First Presentation on Staffing, Personnel, and Nominations

H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima moderated a hearing session.

9.1.1 Membership

Metropolitan Gennadios asked Dr Tveit to present the membership matters.

The central committee decided that two applicant churches for membership in the WCC - The Africa Brotherhood Church and the Baptist Community in Central Africa (DRC) - participate in the work of the WCC and interact with the local fellowship of member churches for an interim period, until the next CC meeting in 2018 where a final decision is made.

With regard to the suspension of the Church of Jesus Christ on Earth by His special Envoy Simon Kimbangu (Kimbanguist Church) from WCC fellowship, a meeting has been proposed by the general secretary with the spiritual leader of the church for December to confirm with the leadership of this church if the church is ready to go through the necessary process in order to clarify its status within the ecumenical family.

A process of internal discernment and analysis for proposing a code of conduct regarding the details of relationships between WCC and a suspended member church has begun. This will be shared with the Permanent Committee on Consensus and Collaboration which is planned to take place in October 2017.

There are about 4-5 member churches which have been inactive for years and where there is some doubt whether these churches still exist. Staff will make efforts to clarify the situation of these churches in close collaboration with WCC member churches in different regions, with national council of churches, regional ecumenical organizations and Christian world communions.

9.1.2. NOMINATIONS

The general secretary shared two of the three pending nominations for the central committee had been made by the churches. In addition, there are two pending replacements in the CWME.

Metropolitan Gennadios thanked the general secretary for this report.

9.1.3 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WCC

Metropolitan Gennadios of Sassima welcomed Mr Georges Lemopoulos (WCC coordinator, 70th Anniversary) to the meeting and invited him to share the report. There are many events throughout the anniversary year, spread throughout programmatic activities. The idea is to celebrate the anniversary through activities that are already planned in the programme areas. Though there will be many events throughout the year, he anticipates that the culmination point will be the central committee meeting in Geneva in 2018.

Three elements of the activities will hold them all together throughout the year. One is the presence or message of the general secretary, the second is the communications strategy that will set the tone for all events, and the third is prayers that will constitute the platform that will hold all the events together. Mr Lemopoulos went through the report.

During the following discussion, Mr Lemopoulos clarified that there will be further updates after the coordinating committee meets and another update to the next meeting of the executive committee in November 2017.

The committee members expressed excitement about the anniversary and the events planned.

9.1.4. CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING

Metropolitan Gennadios invited Mr Noffsinger to present the building blocks for the next meeting of the central committee which will meet in June 2018.

The suggestion for the theme of the next central committee meeting is “Moving and serving together for justice and peace”. There should be four thematic plenaries planned.

The standing business matters for this central committee meeting will include:

- Strategic Plan 2018-2021
- Governance – matters such as membership, nominations plus
    - 11th Assembly
    - General Secretary Renewal Process (see supplement to the rules)

- Programme – reports form commissions and advisory groups plus
    - Conference on World Mission and Evangelism
    - Gender Advisory Group
    - Global Health Strategy
    - Sustainable Development Goals
- Finance – finance policy matters plus
    - Financial Strategy 2018-2021

In terms of the spiritual life, the CC meeting will include an opening and closing prayer, daily prayer and Bible studies and an opportunity to worship on Sunday.

In addition, this central committee meeting will include a large celebration of the WCC 70th anniversary and will include the following elements:

- Spiritual life – including Sunday worship
- Thematic plenary
- Fellowship time on Sunday afternoon
- Participation – church leaders specially invited to participate in parts of the agenda
- Possible participation of special guests.

These matters were referred to the staffing, personnel and nominations sub-committee for further work.

9.2. STAFFING AND OTHER MATTERS

Bishop Swenson moderated a closed session and the general secretary shared information on staffing, including vacancies, recruitments, and appointments, and departures. He also updated the executive committee about the new Staff Rules and Regulations.

The general secretary recalled that there had been a question in a previous session about how staff resources are managed in a period where there are not as many as before. He reminded the committee of the measures that had to be taken in light of the exchange rate changes by the Swiss National Bank in 2015. This resulted in a reduction in the total staff budget, of about 1 million CHF. As a result, different capacities in the council were reduced. Not as many staff in the senior leadership level were appointed. The number of programme assistants was reduced and organized a pool of administrative assistants under the leadership of Ms Catherine Christ-Taha.

9.3. ACTION ON THE REPORT OF THE STAFFING, PERSONNEL, AND NOMINATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE

Dr Abuom moderated a decision session and invited Bishop Simo Peura to present the report of the staffing, personnel, and nominations sub-committee.

9.3.1 GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

The general secretary's report was received by the Staffing, Personnel and Nominations sub-committee with much appreciation for the challenge and focus on unity as a primary purpose of the World Council of Churches. It challenges us to consider unity in the context of the contemporary setting in which many other geo-political and sociological issues engage the attention of society and churches. Much attention is given to occupation of the Palestinian Territories, violence, refugees, global warming and more recently the food crises in Africa. But these conversations are void of how "unity" plays a role in the midst of and

response to these crises. Special attention should be given to the issue of unity in bilateral and multilateral dialogues. Additionally, the general secretary's report encourages sincere consideration be given to the topic as planning for the 11th assembly in 2021 begins.

The report is significant and should be considered beyond the confines of this executive committee meeting. The sub-committee asks that it additionally be submitted to the permanent committee on consensus and collaboration and the Faith and Order Commission for further study and integration into their work.

With the importance of unity in the life of the WCC, the sub-committee wondered how this might become a key outcome indicator through the mid-term evaluation. Is there conscious effort within programme evaluation considering how the work and activities serve as a catalyst for accomplishing unity among the churches?

Defining unity requires important consideration. Without clarity on what expected "unity" is and how it is accomplished in the contemporary context provides space for a divergence of thought among member churches, and becomes an obscure objective to be attained, if ever. On our way to unity, we must realize that our diminished understanding and commitment to unity may become a stumbling block.

The staffing, personnel, and nominations sub-committee recommends that:

- *The executive committee expresses its appreciation to the general secretary for his report and the challenge and focus on unity as a primary purpose of the WCC.*
- *The executive committee recommends that the text of the welcome remarks of the moderator be included in the minutes of the meeting.*

After some discussion, these recommendations were approved by consensus.

9.3.2. NOMINATIONS

The sub-committee considered the proposals from the churches for nominations.

Central and Executive Committees

A. Syrian Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East. H.E. Archbishop Mor Dionysius John Kawak (M/O) to replace H.E. Metropolitan Eustathius Matta Roham (M/O) following his resignation from the Central Committee.
B. Church of the Province of West Africa. The Most Rev. Prof. Daniel Yinkah Sarfo (M/O), Primate of the church, to replace the late Most Rev. Dr S. Tilewa Johnson (M/O) on the central committee.

The staffing, personnel, and nominations sub-committee recommends that:

- *The executive committee receives these names and forwards them to the central committee for decision.*

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

C. Rev. Alexander Vasyutin (M/O) from the Russian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate) resigned from the WCC Central Committee. The church has communicated that a nomination is coming soon.

The staffing, personnel, and nominations sub-committee recommends that:

- *The executive committee asks the general secretary to continue inviting the church to propose a replacement.*

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

D. Armenian Apostolic Church (Holy See of Cilicia). Ms Teny Pirri-Simonian to replace H.G. Archbishop Nareg Alemezian following his resignation from the executive committee.
E. Igreja Evangélica de Confissão Luterana no Brasil. Mr Thomas Kang has resigned from the executive committee. No replacement is expected.

The staffing, personnel, and nominations sub-committee recommends that:
- *The executive committee takes note of these two cases.*

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

Commissions

A. Coptic Orthodox Church. H.G. Bishop Angaelos (M/O) to replace H.G. Bishop Youanes (M/O) following his resignation from the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA).

B. Ecumenical Patriarchate. Very Rev. Deacon Nephon Tsimalis (M/O) to replace Rev. Dr John Chryssavgis (M/O) from his resignation from the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME).

The staffing, personnel, and nominations sub-committee recommends that:
- *The executive committee receives these names and forwards them to the central committee for decision and in the interim period invite H.G. Bishop Angaelos to the next meeting of the CCIA to participate as an observer.*

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

Advisory Bodies

The executive committee expressed concern at the low Orthodox participation in some advisory bodies and made suggestions for the general secretary to follow up on replacements for the following:

A. Reference Group on Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace
    1. Ecumenical Patriarchate. Prof. Dr Dimitra Koukoura to replace Rev. Prof. Emmanuel Clapsis.
    2. Armenian Apostolic Church (Holy See of Cilicia). A replacement to be named for Dr Nora Bayrakdarian-Kabakian.

B. Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace Theological Study Group
    1. Ecumenical Patriarchate. Prof. Dr Dimitra Koukoura to replace Rev. Prof. Emmanuel Clapsis.
    2. Armenian Apostolic Church (Holy See of Cilicia). A replacement to be named for Fr. Housig Martirossian

C. Gender Advisory Group
    1. A person from the Eastern Oriental church family to be added to the group.

D. Human Sexuality Reference Group
    1. Armenian Apostolic Church (Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin). A replacement to be named for Archdeacon Hratch Sarkissian.

The staffing, personnel, and nominations sub-committee recommends that:

- *The executive committee encourages the general secretary to ensure sufficient Orthodox participation (both Eastern and Oriental) on these advisory bodies.*

In the discussion which followed, a few corrections were made, and the recommendations above reflect these.

With those amendments, the recommendation was approved by consensus.

9.3.3. CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING, JUNE 2018

The sub-committee discussed the building blocks for developing the agenda for the central committee meeting to be held in June 2018.

The theme "Walking and Serving Together for Justice and Peace" was discussed as well as suggestions for thematic plenaries. The central committee meeting should provide a moment for special focus on 70 years of WCC. Each plenary should incorporate elements of recognizing the history while presenting issues of current interest. The plenaries suggested include:

- Experiences from the pilgrimage – what kind of understanding of unity has come from our pilgrimages; how does the pilgrimage contribute to community; can we discover one another as different members of the fellowship as we walk together in unity
- New ways of search for visible unity
- Ecumenical Diakonia – this is the focus of 2018 for the PJP and will be addressed at the joint consultation in conjunction with the ACT Alliance assembly and the executive committee meeting in November 2018
- Fear and dignity of the human person/humanity – as we move together, there is a certain fear that comes especially in this age of terrorism; where is the hope in this context; can be related to the religion and violence discussion
- 70th anniversary – this could be a panel discussion reflecting on the 70 years

These suggestions should also be brought to the permanent committee for consensus and collaboration for their feedback and the general secretary is asked to work on these proposals with the staff and invite potential speakers. More concrete proposals should be prepared for the next meeting of the executive committee in November 2017.

In discussing the business of the central committee the list presented was confirmed with Green Village added. The June 2018 meeting will include:

- Strategic Plan 2018-2021
- Governance – matters such as membership, nominations plus
    - 11th Assembly
    - General Secretary Renewal Process (see supplement to the rules)
- Programme – reports from commissions and advisory groups plus
    - World Mission Conference

    - Gender Advisory Group
    - Global Health Strategy
    - Sustainable Development Goals
- Finance – finance policy matters plus
    - Financial Strategy 2018-2021
- Green Village

For the Bible studies the sub-committee suggested that one person be asked to lead throughout the meeting using innovative methodologies.

The staffing, personnel, and nominations sub-committee recommends that:

- *The executive committee suggests the theme: 2018 Walking and Serving Together for Justice and Peace for the next central committee meeting and encourages the general secretary to develop further plans for the meeting to present at the next executive committee meeting in November 2017.*

- *The following subjects for plenaries should be considered:*
    - *Experiences from the pilgrimage*
    - *New ways of search for visible unity*
    - *Ecumenical Diakonia*
    - *Fear and dignity of the human person/humanity*
    - *70th anniversary*

- *A further developed agenda should be presented to the next meeting of the executive committee in November 2017.*

These recommendations were approved by consensus.

9.3.4 FUTURE DATES OF GOVERNING BODY MEETINGS

The general secretary is asked to bring proposed dates for the 2019 and 2020 meetings of the executive committee at the next executive committee meeting in November 2017.

For the assembly planning committee (APC), there was a discussion about the agenda for each meeting and whether the meeting directly following the central committee meeting in June 2018 would be needed. Because the theme and venue will only be decided at the CC meeting, the sub-committee suggested that the second APC meeting be postponed till December 2018. This will give more time to consider the theme in the host context for further work by the APC.

The staffing, personnel, and nominations sub-committee recommends that:

- *The executive committee suggests that the general secretary postpone the APC scheduled for June 2018 to early December 2018, and that this is taken into consideration in the planning of the 2018 budget.*

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

9.3.5. CELEBRATIONS OF THE WCC 70TH ANNIVERSARY

The sub-committee discussed the document and preliminary plans for celebrating the 70th anniversary of the WCC including some ideas for communication. The sub-committee urged caution in deciding who will be profiled and what programmes would be highlighted in communicating the commemoration of the 70 years. The executive committee members were encouraged to send in ideas for the celebration.

It was clarified that the coordination committee has been set up to advise the general secretary.

The sub-committee proposes sending invitations to former general secretaries, former moderators and vice-moderators to participate in this meeting of the central committee.

In terms of key decisions to be taken before the next executive committee in November 2018, if there are some issues that require consideration by the executive committee, then the general secretary will share them with the members of the executive committee.

In consultation with the programme sub-committee, the staffing, personnel, and nominations sub-committee recommends that:

- *The executive committee affirms the general direction for planning the 70th anniversary celebrations as reflected in Doc. No. 28.*
- *That any plans for celebrating the 70th anniversary are included in the 2018 budget;*
- *The general secretary to report on more developed plans to the next executive committee meeting in November 2017.*
- *The general secretary is encouraged to consider putting someone from the Middle East on the coordination committee.*
- *The general secretary to write to member churches and national councils of churches encouraging them to celebrate 70 years of WCC in their own contexts.*

This recommendation was approved by consensus.

9.3.6. ASSEMBLY PREPARATIONS

The sub-committee discussed the work done on assembly preparations so far and plans for the period between now and the next central committee meeting in June 2018. The sub-committee affirmed the work done and the next steps.

It was suggested that some APC members (those named by the CC) participate in the venue visits. A progress report would be expected at the next executive committee meeting in November 2017. In addition, a report on the venue visits will be brought to the APC in February 2018 and submitted to the central committee for decision at its meeting in June 2018.

The staffing, personnel, and nominations sub-committee recommends that:

- *The executive committee affirms the next steps in preparing for the WCC 11th assembly as reflected in Doc. No. 29.*
- *The general secretary is to update the executive committee on assembly preparations at its next meeting in November 2017.*

These recommendations were approved by consensus.

9.3.7 MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

1. The sub-committee reviewed the information on the new member churches which are to be received into full membership at the next meeting of the central committee:
   - The Africa Brotherhood Church (Kenya)
   - Baptist Community in Central Africa (Democratic Republic of Congo).

2. Suspension of the Church of Jesus Christ on Earth by His Special Envoy Simon Kimbangu from WCC fellowship

   The sub-committee went over the information provided in Doc. No. 26 on the suspension of this church. The head of the church has expressed his desire to welcome the general secretary and his delegation for a visit to get more clarity on this matter.

   A process was initiated by the general secretary for internal discernment and analysis for proposing a code of conduct regarding the details of relationships between WCC and a suspended member church. A first draft will be shared with the permanent committee on consensus and collaboration at its next meeting planned for October 2017. The document will then be shared with the executive committee at its next meeting in November 2017. This will provide a section to be included in the Supplement to the Rules.

3. Doubt about the existence of some WCC member churches

There are about four member churches which have been inactive for many years, and there is some doubt whether these churches still exist:
- Église protestante d'Algérie
- International Evangelical Church (USA)
- Bengal-Orissa-Bihar Baptist Convention
- Samavesam of Telugu Baptist Churches

The sub-committee supported the visits to these churches, planned in the next six months to determine whether they still exist and are interested in belonging to the fellowship of WCC member churches. Depending on the results of these visits a new section to the WCC Rules may have to be developed to deal with such cases.

In the discussion which followed, said that for the visits to inactive churches, there has already been contact with the regional ecumenical organizations (REOs) but this has not brought enough information. It is important to determine the actual situation of the church before taking measures on WCC membership. The committee encouraged the general secretary not to incur too many costs in these visits and to use reliable partners in the country as much as possible.

The moderator thanked the sub-committee for the report and the entire report was adopted by consensus.

10. Future Central Committee and Executive Committee Meetings

10.1. DATES AND VENUES OF UPCOMING MEETINGS

Metropolitan Gennadios moderated a hearing session and asked Mr Noffsinger to go over the list of upcoming dates and venues for future governing body meetings. He invited executive committee

members to note of these upcoming dates on their calendars to help ensure full participation in these meetings.

2017		
CC Leadership	18-20 October	Nairobi, Kenya
Executive Committee	17-23 November	Amman, Jordan
(Arrival 15/11 for Petra visit on 16/11)		
2018		
Assembly Planning Committee	1-6 February	Bossey, Switzerland
CC Leadership	March/April	Geneva, Switzerland
Executive Committee	13-14 June	Geneva, Switzerland
Central Committee	15-21 June	Geneva, Switzerland
CC Leadership	September	Geneva, Switzerland
Executive Committee	(1) 2-8 November	Uppsala, Sweden
(in conjunction with ACT Alliance Assembly; joint consultation on 1 November)		
Assembly Planning Committee	beginning December	tbd
2019 *(to be decided in June 2018 with new EC members)*		
CC Leadership	February	Geneva, Switzerland
Executive Committee	May/June	tbd
Assembly Planning Committee	tbd	Assembly venue (tbc)
CC Leadership	August	Geneva, Switzerland
Executive Committee	November	tbd

2020		
CC Leadership	January	Geneva, Switzerland
Executive Committee	Mar/April	Bossey, Switzerland
Executive Committee	June/July (2 days)	Geneva, Switzerland
Central Committee	June/July	Geneva, Switzerland
Assembly Planning Committee	In conjunction with CC	
CC Leadership	August	Geneva, Switzerland
Executive Committee	November	tbd

2021		
CC Leadership	Jan/Feb	Geneva, Switzerland
Executive Committee	May/June	Geneva/Bossey, Switzerland
Assembly		tbd

In response to a question about setting dates for 2019 and 2020, the general secretary expressed his reluctance to set dates for a committee where a third of the members were not present, i.e. the new rotation of members who will begin their term only in 2018.

Prof. Dr Phiri shared that the general secretary of the WCC moderates the ACT Alliance meetings. We should also consider that the general secretary needs to be at the ACT Alliance meeting, which is 28 October – 1 November. It was noted that he would already be busy during that last week of October.

He added that staff would start exploring these dates as soon as possible with the new members of the executive.

11. Closing Actions

11.1. Evaluation and Assessment of the Meeting

The executive committee members were sent an electronic link to fill out an evaluation of the meeting online.

11.2. Recognitions

Bishop Dr Swenson moderated a hearing session and informed the members of the executive committee that Bishop Samuel Azariah and Dr Agnes Abuom had travelled to London where they were honoured by the Archbishop of Canterbury. Bishop Azariah offered thanks for these kind words. It was a humbling experience for him and for Dr Abuom to have received this recognition from the Archbishop of Canterbury about some of the things they were involved in.

The award that he received was The Hubert Walter Award for Reconciliation and Interfaith Cooperation**,** which is about reconciliation and inter-faith in the context in which he was working in and living. He is grateful to God and to the church and the Anglican Communion for recognizing the little role that he has played in the Church of Pakistan. He added that the WCC was warmly recognized in that gathering.

The award Dr Abuom received was The Lambeth Cross for Ecumenism. The Archbishop of Sweden and a few others received the same award. It was a moment of celebration but also recognized that each one of us makes efforts that contribute to the larger picture. She hopes this will continue to inspire us on our journey of work that we have been engaged in many years.

Both members felt that this is a recognition of the place that the Archbishop puts on the entire ecumenical movement at a time when we in the communions are struggling to maintain the spirit of unity.

11.3. CLOSING

Bishop Dr Swenson offered thanks again to everyone for the way in which everyone gave of themselves to the tasks these past days.

She re-confirmed the dates of the next executive committee meeting in Amman, Jordan as: 17-23 November 2017 and invited Dr Quawas to speak a bit about the upcoming meeting.

Rev. Baoping Kan offered a closing prayer.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:56 pm.

APPENDIX I: PARTICIPANTS LIST

Leadership	Dr Agnes Abuom, Moderator H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima, Vice-Moderator Bishop Dr Mary Ann Swenson, Vice-Moderator Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit, General Secretary
Members	H.E. Archbishop Dr Vicken Aykazian Bishop Samuel Robert Azariah Rev. Dr Hyun Ju Bae Bishop Petra Bosse-Huber Rev. Dr Paul Gardner Archpriest Mikhail Goundiaev Rev. Dr Henriette Hutabarat-Lebang Rev. Baoping Kan Prof. Dr Marina Kolovopoulou Rev. Taaroanui Maraea H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Nifon of Targoviste Ms Teny Pirri-Simonian (substitute) Bishop Simo Peura Dr Audeh B. Quawas Rev. Dr Sharon Watkins Metropolitan Dr Mor Geevarghese Coorilos, CWME
Advisers	Ms Sarah Kambarami, ACT Alliance Ms Jennifer P. Martin, PJP Reference Group Mr Jim Winker, NCCCUSA Rev. Dr Gustav Claassen, Dutch Reformed Church Prof. Dr Mary Anne Plaatjies van Huffel, Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa
Guests	Mr Adriaan Fourie, Cape Town & Western Cape Convention Bureau Bishop Rosemarie Wenner, World Methodist Council
Apologies	H.G. Archbishop Nareg Alemezian Dr Abba Haile Mariam Melese Ayenew Rev. Dr Micheline Kamba Kasongo Ms Martina Viktorie Kopecká Most Rev. Dr Chibuzo Raphael Opoko Bishop John F. White Rev. Robina Winbush
Minute-Writer	Ms Adele Halliday

Staff Leadership Group

Ms Elaine Dykes	Director, Finance
Ms Marianne Ejdersten	Director, Communication
Mr Stanley Noffsinger	Director, Office of the General Secretariat
Prof. Dr Isabel Phiri	Deputy General Secretary
Fr Prof. Dr Ioan Sauca	Deputy General Secretary

Staff

Rev. Dr Owe Boersma	International Coordinator for EAPPI
Archpriest Prof. Daniel Buda	Programme Executive for Faith and Order, Church and Ecumenical Relations
Mr Douglas Chial	Manager, Income Monitoring and Development and PMER
Ms Catherine Christ-Taha	Coordinator, Conference Office
Mr Mark Johnson	Manager, Finance
Rev. Dr Jooseop Keum	Director, Commission on World Mission and Evangelism
Ms Carla Khijoyan	Programme Executive for Youth and Peace-Building
Dr Manoj Kurian	Coordinator, WCC-Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance
Dr Nigussu Legesse	Programme Executive for Peace-Building
Mr Georges Lemopoulos	Coordinator, WCC's 70th Anniversary
Dr Fulata Moyo	Programme Executive for Just Community of Women and Men
Mr Michel Nseir	Programme Executive for Peace-Building
Ms Jennifer Philpot-Nissen	Programme Executive for CCIA
Mr Peter Prove	Director, Commission of the Churches on International Affairs
Rev. Dr Martin Robra	Programme Executive for Continuing Ecumenical Education, Diakonia and Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace
Ms Frederique Seidel	Special Advisor for Child Rights

APPENDIX II: MEMBERSHIP OF SUB-COMMITTEES

Programme

Dr Agnes Abuom
Bishop Petra Bosse-Huber
Rev. Dr Henriette Hutabarat-Lebang
Prof. Dr Marina Kolovopoulou
Rev. Dr Sharon Watkins (mod)

Advisers
Ms Sarah Kambarami
Mr Jim Winker

Apologies:
Dr Abba Haile Mariam Melese Ayenew
Rev. Dr Micheline Kamba Kasongo
Rev. Robina Winbush

Finance

H.E. Archbishop Dr Vicken Aykazian (mod)
Rev. Dr Hyun Ju Bae
Rev. Dr Paul Gardner
Archpriest Mikhail Goundiaev
Rev. Taaroanui Maraea
Bishop Mary Ann Swenson

Apologies:
Most Rev. Dr Chibuzo Raphael Opoko

Staffing, Personnel and Nominations

Bishop Samuel Robert Azariah
H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima (mod)
Rev. Baoping Kan
H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Nifon of Targoviste
Bishop Simo Peura
Ms Teny Pirri-Simonian
Dr Audeh B. Quawas
Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit
Bishop John F. White

Apologies:
H.G. Archbishop Nareg Alemezian
Ms Martina Viktorie Kopecká

Public Issues
Dr Agnes Abuom
Rev. Taaroanui Maraea
H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Nifon of Targoviste (mod)
Dr Audeh B. Quawas
Ms Sarah Kambarami
Mr Jim Winker

APPENDIX III: GENERAL SECRETARY TRAVELS AND MEETINGS FROM 25 NOVEMBER 2016 – 6 JUNE 2017

Travels 25 November 2016 – 6 June 2017

Date	Place	Purpose
November 26, 2016	Seoul, Korea	Visit to WCC colleague, Rev. Dr Dong Sung KIM Meeting with Korean church leaders
November 30 – December 3, 2016	New York, New York	Attended Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children, GS serves on the organization's board of directors. Meetings with colleagues in the UN Ecumenical Office and with UN and church officials
December 5-9, 2016	Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Palestine	Led WCC delegation to the Holy Land
December 9, 2016	Istanbul, Turkey	Meeting with His All Holiness the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I, Archbishop of Constantinople
December 14-16, 2016	Karlsruhe and Stuttgart, Germany	Meeting with Baden-Württemberg minister-president, Winfried Kretschmann Attended EKD KÖME (Konferenz Ökumene, Mission und Entwicklung Participated in the panel discussion on "Melanchthons significance for the Reformation and Ecumenical Movement and Peace – event of the European Roadmap
January 17-19, 2017	Davos, Switzerland	World Economic Forum Annual Meeting
January 21-24	Baghdad and Erbil, Iraq	Led ecumenical high level delegation Meetings with church officials, government authorities and civil society
February 13-17	Trondheim and Oslo	Trondheim: The International Student Festival In Trondheim (ISFiT), participated in panel discussion on Discrimination Christianity and Islam" Oslo: Visited Church of Norway and government officials
February 26-March 1, 2017	Addis Ababa, Ethiopia	CCIA Commission Meetings with church officials
March 11-12, 2017	Hannover, Germany	High level reformation worship jointly organised by EKD and Catholic Bishops
March 27-28, 2017	Oslo, Norway	Meeting with Church of Norway Council

March 30-April 1, 2017	Jerusalem, Palestine/Israel	Conversations with partners and member churches, planning for Pentecost in Jerusalem
April 18-21, 2017	Washington and New York	Washington: high level round table meeting with World Bank and faith leaders NY: WCC EUNO office and meetings with UN representatives
April 25-29, 2017	Cairo, Egypt	Led WCC delegation for a return visit to the Grand Imam of Al Azhar; held meeting at University in Cairo on the theme of "The Role of Religious Leaders to Promote Initiatives on Citizenship and Peaceful Co-existence" **Attended the worship service with world church leaders, led by Pope Tawadros II and Pope Francis in St. Peter and St. Paul's Church.** Visit to WCC member churches in Egypt
May 11-15, 2017	Windhoek, Namibia	LWF Assembly, presented greetings on behalf of WCC
May 17-20, 2017	Victoria Falls and Harare, Zimbabwe	Led ecumenical solidarity visit of church leaders which included meetings with the different churches and with government officials Delivered sermon at ecumenical worship service in Harare
May 26-28, 2017	Berlin, Germany	Kirchentag; delivered sermon at ecumenical worship service
May 30-1, 2017	Seoul, Korea	Meeting with newly elected President Moon Jae-in to discuss the ecumenical movement's contribution to peace in the Korean Peninsula. Meeting with WCC president for Asia, Dr Sang Chang Meetings with member churches and KCF
June 3-5, 2017	Jerusalem, Palestine/Israel	Accompany pilgrimage of young people to Jerusalem to celebrate Pentecost Pentecost worship with Jerusalem churches leaders in the Upper Room

Meetings/events in Geneva

Date	Place	Purpose
December 12, 2016	Palais des Nations, UN	Side event organized by the WCC with the Norwegian Mission in Geneva and Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) to present the WCC and NCA report titled, "The Protection Needs of Minorities from Syria and Iraq". The report was funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and was launched in Oslo on 28 November 2016. The side event was preceded by a press conference.
December 12, 2016	Ecumenical Centre followed by Ec. Institute Bossey	Escalade celebrations with Conseil de Grand Saconnex
December 20, 2016	WCC	Staff Christmas drinks
January 10, 2017	WCC	Mr Idriss Jazairy, Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of the unilateral coercive measures
January 13, 2017	WCC	Meeting and lunch with Executive Board of the National Church Council of Finland
January 25, 2017	WCC	Visit of CCIA Moderator Rev. Frank Chikane
January 26, 2017	Ecumenical Centre followed by Ec. Institute Bossey	Farewell party for Yorgo Lemopoulos, Deputy General Secretary followed by private dinner at the GS residence
January 31-February 2, 2017	Ec. Institute Bossey	Meeting of REOs General Secretaries
February 8-9, 2017	Ecumenical Centre and Ec. Institute Bossey	Official Visit of HH Abuna Matias, Patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church
February 20,2017	WCC	Courtesy Visit Indonesia Acting Ambassador
March 6-9, 2017	WCC	Staff Planning Days
March 7, 2017	Palais des Nations	Panellist in Side Event on: Supporting Christians and Other Communities during the UN Human Rights Council 34th Session.
March 8, 2017	Finnish Mission	Meeting with Finnish Ambassador for Intercultural Dialogue Processes Mr Pekka Metso
March 8, 2017	WCC	M. Jean-Christophe Peaucelle, French Ambassador and advisor on religious affairs

March 10, 2017	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of Former Brazilian President Dilma Roussef
March 10, 2017	WCC	Meeting with leadership of Life and Peace Institute
March 13, 2017	Ec. Institute Bossey	Meeting of the WCC building project steering committee
March 14-15, 2017	WCC	Meeting of the Leadership of the WCC central committee
March 15, 2017	Palais des Nations	UEA Minister for Tolerance - Bilateral Meeting followed by lunch in honour of the Minister
March 15, 2017	Palais des Nations	Panellist on side-event on "The point of convergence between Islam and Christianity" during the UN Human Rights Council 34th Session
March 16,2017	WCC	Visit of Bishop Marigza from United Church of Christ in the Philippines and Rev. Jochen Motte from UEM, Germany
March 17, 2017	Ecumenical Centre	Greet delegation of Shia students
March 18, 2017	WCC	Lunch meeting with Fr John Chryssavgis and son
March 18, 2017	WCC	Courtesy visit South African Ambassador HE Mxakato-Diseko
March 20, 2017	WCC	Skype meeting with LWF GS, CWM GS and WRCR GS on NIFEA (project on economic justice)
March 20, 2017	Residence of Norwegian Ambassador	Lunch meeting with HE Mr Hans Brattskar
March 20, 2017	WCC	Courtesy visit Ms Malayah Harper new general secretary World YWCA
March 27-30, 2017	Ecumenical Centre	WCC-EAPPI annual meeting and Holy Land Advocacy Consultation
March 29, 2017	WCC	Visit of Rev. Dr Ofelia Ortega, former WCC president for Latin America and the Caribbean
March 29, 2017	WCC	Visit of Mr Idriss Jazairy, Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of the unilateral coercive measures
April 4, 2017	WCC	Courtesy Visit of HE Mr Milorad Scepanovic, Montenegro Ambassador
April 6, 2017	Greek Mission	Courtesy visit to H.E. Mrs Anna KORKA, Greek Ambassador

April 24, 2017	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of All Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew, Ecumenical Patriarchate, public lecture followed by reception and private lunch
May 4, 2017	WCC	Visit of Mr Jérôme Kitoko, First President of the Supreme Court in DRC and President of the Judiciary
May 4, 2017	WCC	Greet 20 journalism students from the Evangelische Journalistenschule
May 8, 2017	GS Residence in Bossey	Dinner with Orthodox colleagues and Orthodox representatives of ecumenical delegations to the WCC
May 9, 2017	Ecumenical Centre	Introduced photo exhibition of human rights violations in the Philippines in conjunction with the UPR of the Philippines
May 22-23, 2017	Ec. Institute Bossey	Meeting of the Global Christian Forum
May 24, 2017	Ecumenical Centre	Global Health Strategic Plan meeting

APPENDIX IV: UPDATE ON THE WCC BUILDING DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

We report further progress towards the objective of securing an approved Area Development Plan (ADP) for *Green Village.* On 19 May 2017, the ADP entered the 30-day period of opposition. A formal opposition is expected from the local residents' association, *Radar*, which presented a letter of observations concerning traffic impact during the period of public inquiry in September 2016. If any opposition arising can be satisfactorily negotiated in the coming months, we remain optimistic that the ADP will be adopted by the State Council by the end of 2017.

We highlight two further points of importance since November 2016, in relation to the ADP process. Firstly, on 20 February 2017, the Commune of Grand-Saconnex issued a favourable opinion on the ADP, subject to the WCC ceding up to a maximum of 4 metres width of land along the southern and eastern sides of the estate, for cycle-paths and pavements. After discussion with the Commune, the ADP was adapted accordingly.

Secondly, on 24 April 2017, it was recommended by the heritage department that an architectural study be conducted of the main building (building A) in some detail, specifying which elements are to be renovated to original quality; which may be renovated and transformed; and which are without interest to the heritage department. The study is to be submitted to the State Council with the ADP, and the proposal for classification of building A. The work involved in the study offers an opportunity to identify ways in which the use of the existing space in the Ecumenical Centre might be optimised creatively, while respecting the heritage department's guidance.

Extract from WCC's ADP for *Green Village*, with references noted for buildings

Green village

A: Offices and Chapel 4,245 sqm
B: Ecumenical Centre offices 7,935 sqm
C: Offices 12,640 sqm
D: Offices & commercial area 9,040 sqm
E: Offices 13,990 sqm
F: Apartments 6,010 sqm
G: Hotel-residence 7,840 sqm

Car park spaces: 585 spaces

Campus Santé

H: *Global Fund's headquarters*, on neighbouring plot; and now under construction

Building project timeline

The timeline reported at Executive Committee in November 2016 is still considered realistic. With WCC's support, Implenia is implementing measures to optimise the timeline, including the possibility of a commercial transaction on an anticipated, or "goodwill" basis, for building E in 2018, before delivery of building permit. The timeline highlights June 2019 as a first possible transaction date, with building permit.

Completion dates, estimated and actual					
		Actual	Contract, signed 30.5.12	Reported at central com, July 2016	Revised Nov 2016
Phase	**Description**				
0	Preparatory assessment of buildings	31.12.12	30.9.12		
1	Architects' competition	31.10.13	30.6.13		
	Deivery of ADP to Canton	30.11.14	*30.9.13**		
2	Canton and State Council adopt ADP		30.9.14	31.12.16	31.12.17
	Iterative phases				
3	Building permit adopted		30.9.15	31.12.17	31.12.18
4	Financial objective for sale defined		31.12.15	30.11.17	31.1.19
5	Commercialisation: investor designated		31.3.16	31.12.17	30.6.19
6	Delivery of building		31.3.18	31.12.19	31.3.22

*Date not in development contract, but defined in the rules for the architects' competition as being 40 days after end of competition. Additional time was required because of State request to consider additional housing; and because of detailed traffic study required, given that the ADP includes more than 500 car park places.

Decisions confirmed, or directions given by WCC

On 15 February 2017, WCC confirmed Implenia's proposal that the architectural mandates be assigned to *LRS Architectes* for buildings E, B and C (56%); to *DL-a* for buildings A and D (22%); and to *Groupe8* for buildings F and G (22%). The attributions were in line with the guidelines and outcome of the architects' competition.

On 13 March 2017, at the steering committee meeting, WCC confirmed that the approach for accelerating commercialisation of buildings E, F and G be adopted, as proposed by Implenia. In adopting this approach, WCC confirmed that:

- E, F and G might be presented informally at the international real estate market event in Cannes in March 2017 (*Marché international des professionnels de l'immobilier)* to test whether investors and hotel operators expressed interest;
- the possibility of presenting building E, with land, for sale before delivery of building permit, and on a "goodwill" basis, without the requirement that WCC accept any resultant offer;
- work should proceed with preliminary studies towards the building permit for E; and
- work should proceed with studies required to shape the whole site, including landscaping, geological studies, car park studies, and an architectural master plan.

On 5 May 2017, WCC approved Implenia's appointment of two hotel consultants, to conduct independent feasibility studies for the hotel project. On 23 May 2017, WCC appointed PwC consultants to advise WCC independently in interpreting the feasibility studies.

Architectural master plan
An architectural master plan is required to ensure that the qualities of the Green Village project are interpreted throughout the project, given that three different architects will work on different buildings. Further, future investors may wish to adapt buildings which they will construct; and WCC may contemplate a sales transaction for building E, even before a building permit is defined. At 5 April, and on 10 May, WCC met with Implenia and architects to consider the elements required in the master plan, which is to be presented in draft to executive committee at this meeting.

During this period:

25.1.17 **Presentation WCC, Implenia and Banque Coop**
Meeting with the Banque Coop (now renamed Banque Cler, from May 2017), with presentation from Implenia on cash flows emerging from holding A and B, with sale of land E; and different alternatives of land lease or sale of other plots.

21.2.17 **WCC review of development costs to date**
WCC met with Implenia to review the level of expenditure recorded by Implenia to date on development costs, compared to the budget outline in the development contract. Costs totalled CHF 594,000 so far, compared to the budget of CHF 900,000 for completion of phase 2, adoption of ADP. It was confirmed that Implenia staff costs are covered separately, in the 2.15% development fee charged on completion of each building.

21.2.17 **VAT**
Discussion was held with an Implenia VAT expert, comparing WCC and Implenia's understanding related to the financial information prepared by Implenia. The meeting identified further work to be conducted by WCC with PwC, related to the possibility of off-setting VAT which WCC will require to pay to Implenia on land valuation margin.

6.3.17 **Recommendations from WCC staff working group on mobility plan**
WCC leadership group received the report and recommendations from the group, which defined a range of sustainable mobility measures or incentives, matching our values as an ecumenical community. The plan is to be rolled out under the guidance of the WCC leadership group.

6.3.17 **Approval for temporary use of small area of WCC land for Global Fund foot paths**
At request of the Commune of Grand-Saconnex, plans were signed allowing the Commune's project for pavements and cycle paths bordering the new Global Fund building to include 66m2 of WCC's land temporarily in the project, so that the new paths can be linked to the existing pavements in an orderly way.

27.3.17 **Audit of WCC rental contracts; launch of process for termination of annual renewable rental contracts**
WCC completed its review of 77 rental contracts. The conclusions and schedule were reviewed with the legal advisor, who recommended the strategy and documentation for termination of annual renewable contracts. The process was launched at end March, and will be completed across the 12 month period to February 2018. Tenants will have the opportunity to accept a fixed-term rental contract to June 2020, following the termination of the annually renewable contract.

28.3.17 **CHF 24 million loan renewed**
The loan of CHF 24 million, maturing 31 March 2017, which had been held at a fixed term rate of 1.3% for five years, was renewed in two tranches; CHF 12 million to 31 March 2018 at 1.45%; and CHF 12 million to 31 March 2019 at 1.06%. No loan reimbursement is required in the period.

12.5.17 **Landscape architecture competition in progress**
A meeting of the group of experts managing the selection of the project was held, to finalise the guidelines for the competition. WCC's objectives for the competition were reviewed at the meeting. WCC will be represented by Fr Prof Dr Ioan Sauca and Mr Stanley Noffsinger, as voting representatives on the panel, which meets in July. The competition was launched on 15 May. On 19 May, WCC received the candidates, and participated in a tour of the grounds.

Other meetings

12.12.16 Grand-Saconnex municipal councillors invited by the general secretary to a presentation at the Ecumenical Centre, and to dinner at Bossey

11.1.17 WCC visit of the Global Fund building site, with Implenia and *LRS Architectes*

23.1.17 WCC attended a presentation on the new project, Cité Internationale du Grand-Morillon, which proposes six or seven buildings for the site opposite the Ecumenical Centre, and is to include the Swiss headquarters of Médecins sans Frontières, residential buildings, and student housing for the Geneva Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies.

15.2.17 Implenia presentation to prospective Chinese investor introduced by Globethics, and who has followed the project since 2014

22.3.17 Grand-Saconnex Commune met with Implenia, architects, Geneva urban planning and WCC, concerning principles for cession of 4m of WCC land for pavements and cycle paths

28.3.17 Implenia's transaction manager reported on attendance at the international real estate market event at Cannes

5.4.17 COPIL meeting 1, Implenia, WCC and architects

6.4.17 Implenia marketing event "Renovation and transformation", held at the Ecumenical Centre, highlighting initiatives for conversion of disused office space in Swiss city centres to residential buildings

27.4.17 Implenia presentation of Building Information Modelling (BIM) as a construction modelling and management system for the project.

10.5.17 COPIL meeting 2, Implenia, WCC and architects

24.5.17 Meeting with Horwath HTL, mandated to conduct a feasibility study for the hotel project, and with PwC consultants.

Outstanding matters
The draft notarial act creating a right of pre-emption for Implenia, as guarantee related to their work already invested in the project, remains under review between the legal counsel of Implenia and WCC's legal advisor.

The application of Geneva regulations related to residential property is yet to be interpreted clearly, with regard to the planned building F, in the international zone, in which it was not foreseen that such buildings would be approved for construction.

A plan is required for rehousing WCC Archives, situated under the site of building F, for which construction is scheduled in autumn 2020. The architectural study of building A is expected to address this requirement.